From:	Bernie Petersen
To:	Kelly Hogan; Jeff King
Cc:	Bernardo Garza; Matthew McCollister; Diane Emmons
Subject:	RE: Travel Plans
Date:	Wednesday, July 19, 2017 9:40:18 AM

Jeff,

Hoping that Helina can spend time with Helen to help with getting her acclimated to everything.

Please make sure that all the staff have the opportunity to participate in this meeting. It will be important, as you already know, that we have good buy in and participation on this project from everyone on the staff. The scoping process is much more robust when we include everyone on staff and often times gets to things we may not have thought about without them.

Nothing you don't already know – just had to give some expectations. I am confident this will go well.

Bernard J Petersen
Refuge Supervisor for Colorado,Montana, Utah, Wyoming
US Fish and Wildlife Service Region 6
National Wildlife Refuge System

303-236-4310 W
720-708-8026 Cell

From: Hogan, Kelly [mailto:kelly_hogan@fws.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, July 19, 2017 9:05 AM
To: King, Jeff
Cc: Bernardo Garza; McCollister, Matthew; Diane Emmons; Bernie Petersen
Subject: Re: Travel Plans

Jeff

Sounds good. Let's pencil in Tuesday for a meeting. We will travel on Monday and Wednesday. I will confirm later today after we make flight arraignments.

Kelly

On Wed, Jul 19, 2017 at 8:53 AM, King, Jeff <jeff_king@fws.gov> wrote:
Kelly,

Only one issue that might be a problem. Helen Edwards will be starting her detail in the visitor center next week. I will need to spend time with her during this transition but hopefully by Tuesday, I can step aside. I won't know until I see how Monday goes.

Let me know if you have questions.

Thanks,

jk

Jeff King, Project Leader
National Bison Range Complex
58355 Bison Range Road
Moiese, MT 59824
(406) 644-2211, ext. 204

On Tue, Jul 18, 2017 at 7:40 AM, Hogan, Kelly <kelly_hogan@fws.gov> wrote:
Jeff

When you get in please let me and Bernardo know if Tues of next week works for a meeting with staff regarding CCP.

Thanks,
K

From:	Bernie Petersen
To:	Kelly Hogan; Jeff King
Cc:	Bernardo Garza; Matthew McCollister; Diane Emmons
Subject:	RE: Travel Plans
Date:	Wednesday, July 19, 2017 9:41:09 AM

I forgot to add this:

I have a meeting scheduled for Berar River water litigation that week so will not be able to attend.

Bernard J Petersen
Refuge Supervisor for Colorado,Montana, Utah, Wyoming
US Fish and Wildlife Service Region 6
National Wildlife Refuge System

303-236-4310 W
720-708-8026 Cell

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To: King, Jeff
Cc: Bernardo Garza; McCollister, Matthew; Diane Emmons; Bernie Petersen
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Thanks,
K

From: King, Jeff
To: Bernie Petersen
Cc: Kelly Hogan; Bernardo Garza; Matthew McCollister; Diane Emmons
Subject: Re: Travel Plans
Date: Wednesday, July 19, 2017 9:46:52 AM

Bernie,

Agreed. One conflict I have is the annual safety inspection. Jim Chandler is scheduled to visit NBR on Tuesday and Lost Trail on Wednesday. Mike Koole and Darren Thomas are the NBR safety officers so they might not be able to attend some or all of the meeting. I am going to contact Jim and see if he can move NBR to Thursday. I will let you know.

Thanks,

jk

Jeff King, Project Leader
National Bison Range Complex
58355 Bison Range Road
Moiese, MT 59824
(406) 644-2211, ext. 204

On Wed, Jul 19, 2017 at 9:40 AM, Bernie Petersen <bernie_petersen@fws.gov> wrote:

> Jeff,
>
> Hoping that Helina can spend time with Helen to help with getting her acclimated to everything.
>
> Please make sure that all the staff have the opportunity to participate in this meeting. It will be important, as you already know, that we have good buy in and participation on this project from everyone on the staff. The scoping process is much more robust when we include everyone on staff and often times gets to things we may not have thought about without them.
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Bernard J Petersen

Refuge Supervisor for Colorado,Montana, Utah, Wyoming

US Fish and Wildlife Service Region 6

National Wildlife Refuge System

303-236-4310 W

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Sent: Wednesday, July 19, 2017 9:05 AM
To: King, Jeff
Cc: Bernardo Garza; McCollister, Matthew; Diane Emmons; Bernie Petersen
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(406) 644-2211, ext. 204

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Jeff

When you get in please let me and Bernardo know if Tues of next week works for a meeting with staff regarding CCP.

Thanks,

K

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: King, Jeff
Subject: Re: Internal scoping meeting
Date: Wednesday, July 19, 2017 1:56:27 PM

I'm available any time tomorrow. Why don't you chose a time Kelly.

On Wed, Jul 19, 2017 at 1:53 PM, King, Jeff <jeff_king@fws.gov> wrote:

> Yes. I'm scheduled to travel to Lost Trail tomorrow for a stream restoration construction update meeting. I can take the call from Lost Trail and perhaps Kevin Shinn could join us. We are available at 12 noon - 1:00 pm or after 2:00 pm. Let me know your preference.
>
> Thanks,
>
> jk
>
> ***Jeff King, Project Leader***
> National Bison Range Complex
> 58355 Bison Range Road
> Moiese, MT 59824
> (406) 644-2211, ext. 204
>
> On Wed, Jul 19, 2017 at 1:30 PM, Hogan, Kelly <kelly_hogan@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> > What about we have a conference call tomorrow afternoon? Does that work for you Jeff? Afterwards we can finalize an agenda.
> >
> > On Wed, Jul 19, 2017 at 1:26 PM, King, Jeff <jeff_king@fws.gov> wrote:
> >
> > > Kelly and Bernardo,
> > >
> > > Sounds like the conflict with our safety inspection has been fixed.
> > >
> > > Let me know the final meeting details when you have them finalized.
> > >
> > > Thanks,
> > >
> > > jk
> > >
> > > ***Jeff King, Project Leader***
> > > National Bison Range Complex
> > > 58355 Bison Range Road

> > Moiese, MT 59824
> > (406) 644-2211, ext. 204

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From:	McCollister, Matthew
To:	Bernardo Garza
Subject:	Fwd: nbr preliminary comment summary
Date:	Monday, July 31, 2017 11:28:18 AM
Attachments:	Comment summary report.docx

NBRC Comment Summary

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **McCollister, Matthew** <matthew_mccollister@fws.gov>
Date: Wed, Jul 12, 2017 at 1:40 PM
Subject: nbr preliminary comment summary
To: Kelly Hogan <kelly_hogan@fws.gov>

--
Matthew McCollister
Wildlife Biologist
Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge

--
Matthew McCollister
Wildlife Biologist
Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge

Comment Summary for National Bison Range

1/2017-7/2017

On January 18, 2017 the USFWS published a NOI in the Federal Register. In this notice, it stated that the Service would begin a CCP process for the National Bison Range that would result in an Environmental Impact Statement analyzing 3 alternatives. The notice also specified a preferred alternative to transfer the NBR to the Confederation of alternatives. This notice, and the subsequent public scoping period that it opened, received comment from 57 entities. These letters and emailed comments were sent from 49 individuals and 8 organizations. The topics covered in these comments are summarized in the table below:

Count	Issue
47	Against transfer from FWS to CSKT
10	FWS is breaking policy, violating NEPA, restart CCP process
8	For transfer from FWS to CSKT
6	CCP should include goals for improving wildlife and habitat resources
4	A transfer is not precedent setting, should be clearly stated as such
3	CCP should include goals for reducing invasive species
3	CCP consider economic impacts and/or increasing public use opportunity
3	CCP should include goals for cultural resources
3	A transfer is precedent setting
1	FWS should improve funding/staffing
1	CCP should improve cooperation/CSKT involvement in refuge programs

On May 18, 2017 the Service published a second NOI revising the previous notice. This revision stated that a CCP process would begin with public scoping to develop alternatives. This change from a predetermined, preferred alternative was a result of earlier scoping efforts and a change in policy, according to the May NOI. Following this notice, FWS held 2 public meetings. On June 6 in Polson Montana, 12 members of the public attended and on Jun 7 in Kalispell 17 members of the public attended. Several attendees were affiliated with organizations and the press. Several individuals submitted written comments and signed up for the CCP mailing list. Overall, the May NOI scoping period has received comment from 18 entities; however, only 4 were new individuals and 4 were new organizations, the other 10 had already contributed comments earlier. The topics covered in these additional comments are summarized in the table below, repeated comments by the same entity were not counted twice:

Count	Issue
3	CCP should include goals for improving wildlife and habitat resources
3	FWS should improve funding/staffing
3	CCP consider economic impacts and/or increasing public use opportunity
2	Against transfer from FWS to CSKT
2	For transfer from FWS to CSKT
2	CCP's primary focus should be on how to manage, not who
2	CCP should improve cooperation/CSKT involvement in refuge programs
1	NBR should manage bison like wildlife, not livestock
1	CCP should include goals for reducing invasive species
1	A transfer is not precedent setting, should be clearly stated as such
1	FWS is breaking policy, violating NEPA, restart CCP process

Overall, most comments included opinion about CSKT involvement in the NBR. Commenters fell on both sides of that argument, and some opponents of CSKT involvement argued that a CCP should not address tribal involvement (via Annual Funding Agreement or other) at all. Overall, conservation organizations supported CSKT involvement and the transfer of NBR, with 9 in favor and 3 opposing.

United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Northwest Regional Office
911 NE 11th Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97232-4169

JUL - 6 2017

In Reply Refer To:
Regional Director

Noreen E. Walsh
Fish and Wildlife Service
Post Office Box 25486
Denver Federal Center
Denver, Colorado 80225-0486

Dear Regional Director Walsh:

Thank you for the invitation to include the Northwest Regional Office, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Portland, Oregon, to participate in the development of the Comprehensive Conservation Plans (CCP) for the units of the National Bison Range Complex (NBRC) in Flathead, Lake, and Sanders Counties, Montana.

I have assigned Mr. David Redhorse, Natural Resources Manager, to serve as the representative of the Northwest Regional Office, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Portland, Oregon, to participate in the planning and development of the CCP.

Mr. David Redhorse can be contacted by phone at (503) 231-6883, or via email at david.redhorse@bia.gov.

Sincerely,

Northwest Regional Director

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	McCollister, Matthew
Subject:	Fwd: Fish and Wildlife - CSKT Comprehensive Conservation Plan
Date:	Monday, July 31, 2017 2:05:27 PM
Attachments:	CCP Flathead.pdf

Here you go

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Griffin, Toni** <toni_griffin@fws.gov>
Date: Wed, Jul 12, 2017 at 7:38 AM
Subject: Fwd: Fish and Wildlife - CSKT Comprehensive Conservation Plan
To: Bernardo Garza <Bernardo_Garza@fws.gov>, Kelly Hogan <kelly_hogan@fws.gov>, Matthew McCollister <matthew_mccollister@fws.gov>

Toni Griffin
Refuge Planning
Mountain-Prairie Region
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
134 Union Blvd
Lakewood, CO 80228
Office Phone: 303/236-4378
Telework: Tuesday, Friday

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Speaks, Stanley** <stanley.speaks@bia.gov>
Date: Fri, Jul 7, 2017 at 5:45 PM
Subject: Fish and Wildlife - CSKT Comprehensive Conservation Plan
To: Toni Griffin <toni_griffin@fws.gov>
Cc: Bodie Shaw <bodie.shaw@bia.gov>, David Redhorse <david.redhorse@bia.gov>, Cheryl Finley <cheryl.finley@bia.gov>

Flathead CCP for National Bison Range.

--
Stanley Speaks
Northwest Regional Director
Bureau of Indian Affairs
911 NE 11th Avenue
Portland,OR 97232
Stanley.speaks@bia.gov
503-231-6702

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Diane Emmons
Subject: NBR CCP Meeting
Date: Tuesday, August 1, 2017 9:56:00 AM

Dee,

You've expressed interest in participating in the meeting we'll be having with the prospective cooperating agencies for the CCP for NBR.

We dates we are looking at for that meeting are either August 29 or 30.

Please let me know as soon as you can if any of those dates work for you.

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Hogan, Kelly
To: Bernardo Garza
Subject: First Meeting letter
Date: Tuesday, August 1, 2017 10:23:06 AM
Attachments: CA first meeting form letter.docx

Bernardo

Rough draft of the letter regarding the first meeting. Take a look and edit massively. Needs some additional info from you.

K

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Mountain-Prairie Region

IN REPLY REFER TO:
FWS/R6/NWRS/Planning
NBR Complex CCP 5.0
Mailstop 60130

MAILING ADDRESS:
P.O. Box 25486, DFC
Denver, Colorado 80225-0486

STREET LOCATION:
134 Union Boulevard
Lakewood, Colorado 80228-1807

«First_Name» «Last_Name», «Title»
«Agency»
«Address»
«City», «State» «ZIP»

Dear «Title» «Last_Name»;

Greetings, first I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for agreeing to participate as a cooperating agency in the development of the Comprehensive Conservation Plans (CCP) for units of the National Bison Range Complex (NBRC) in Flathead, Lake, and Sanders Counties, Montana. Your involvement will help us develop the best possible plan for future management of the NBRC.

Second, it is time to schedule our first cooperating agency meeting. For the first meeting we are proposing a single day meeting the last week in August on Tuesday (8/29), Wednesday (8/30) or Thursday (8/31) at either the Ninepipes Lodge in Charlo MT or (HOTEL) in Missoula MT. Please let Bernardo Garza know by Monday, **August 14**, your preference of date and location. Bernardo's email is Bernardo_Garza@fws.gov or call him at 303-236-4377.

Attached to this letter are XX documents for your review prior to the meeting. The attached include a draft Memorandum of Understand, (BERNARDO list here). I look forward to seeing you all in Montana later this month.

Sincerely,

Bernie Petersen
Refuge Supervisor, Mountain Zone

From:	McCollister, Matthew
To:	Leslie, Elaine
Cc:	Glenn Plumb; Adema, Guy; Bernardo Garza; Kelly Hogan; Bernie Petersen
Subject:	Re: Bison meetings
Date:	Wednesday, August 2, 2017 8:16:03 AM

Ms Leslie,
Thank you for the reply. We are planning to hold our first Cooperating Agency meeting in the last week of August, in the Mission Valley of MT (details are still TBD). At that meeting we will work on the formal MOUs with our cooperators. If you decide later that you would like to take part in the National Bison Range CCP, please let us know. Thank you for getting back to us.

On Wed, Aug 2, 2017 at 7:24 AM, Leslie, Elaine <elaine_leslie@nps.gov> wrote:

> Hi Matthew,
>
> Sorry for the delay. I combed our intermountain region staff from Denver to Glacier for those that could contribute to this effort but no takers at this time. I do thank yo for the opportunity and appreciate the invitation. Please let us know if we can be of further assistance at any time.
>
> Best of luck in your planning efforts,
>
> Elaine
>
> On Mon, Jul 31, 2017 at 2:28 PM, McCollister, Matthew <matthew_mccollister@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> > Ms. Leslie,
> >
> > My name is Matthew McCollister and I am assisting with the planning effort at the National Bison Range in Montana. As I understand it, you were interested in have a representative on the cooperative agency team for this project. We are hoping to have our first team meeting in a month and I am trying make a list of who needs to be contacted. Do you have an individual in mind? Can you send me their information so that I can coordinate with them on this upcoming meeting? Thank you for your help.
> >
> > On Wed, Jul 5, 2017 at 9:24 AM, Griffin, Toni <toni_griffin@fws.gov> wrote:
> >
> > > ---------- Forwarded message ----------
> > > From: **Leslie, Elaine** <elaine_leslie@nps.gov>
> > > Date: Sun, Jul 2, 2017 at 8:48 PM
> > > Subject: Re: Bison meetings
> > > To: "Griffin, Toni" <toni_griffin@fws.gov>
> > >
> > > great thank you stand by for a name...
> > >
> > > On Fri, Jun 30, 2017 at 8:22 AM, Griffin, Toni <toni_griffin@fws.gov> wrote:
> > >
> > > > Hi Elaine,
> > > >
> > > > Thank you for contacting me. We have not set a date for the first cooperating agencies meeting yet, although we are aiming for August. We'll try to find a date that works for the majority of our partners once we have an idea of who

all will be attending.

We appreciate, and are looking forward to your participation in this planning process.

Kind Regards,
Toni

Toni Griffin
Refuge Planning
Mountain-Prairie Region
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
134 Union Blvd
Lakewood, CO 80228
Office Phone: 303/236-4378
Telework: Tuesday, Friday

On Fri, Jun 30, 2017 at 5:44 AM, Elaine Leslie <elaine_leslie@nps.gov> wrote:

> Hi Toni
> I received the attached letter from Noreen this week. One quick question, when is the first meeting?
>
> Thanks for the invite- we are looking around the service for the best rep.
> Best,
> Elaine

--

Elaine F. Leslie
Chief, Biological Resources
Natural Resource Stewardship and Science
National Park Service
970 267-2135

--

Matthew McCollister
Wildlife Biologist
Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge

--

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National Park Service
970 267-2135

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Matthew McCollister
Wildlife Biologist
Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Jeff King; Kevin Shinn
Subject: Fwd: Bison meetings
Date: Wednesday, August 2, 2017 8:56:29 AM

Gentlemen,

FYI

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **McCollister, Matthew** <matthew_mccollister@fws.gov>
Date: Wed, Aug 2, 2017 at 8:15 AM
Subject: Re: Bison meetings
To: "Leslie, Elaine" <elaine_leslie@nps.gov>
Cc: Glenn Plumb <glenn_plumb@nps.gov>, "Adema, Guy" <guy_adema@nps.gov>, Bernardo Garza <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>, Kelly Hogan <kelly_hogan@fws.gov>, Bernie Petersen <bernie_petersen@fws.gov>

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To: "Griffin, Toni" <toni_griffin@fws.gov>

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>
> Kind Regards,
> Toni

Toni Griffin
Refuge Planning
Mountain-Prairie Region
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
134 Union Blvd
Lakewood, CO 80228
Office Phone: 303/236-4378
Telework: Tuesday, Friday

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Elaine F. Leslie
Chief, Biological Resources
Natural Resource Stewardship and Science
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Matthew McCollister
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--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: McCollister, Matthew
To: Bernardo Garza
Subject: Fwd: USFWS planning
Date: Wednesday, August 2, 2017 11:51:56 AM

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **McCollister, Matthew** <matthew_mccollister@fws.gov>
Date: Tue, Aug 1, 2017 at 10:29 AM
Subject: Re: USFWS planning
To: "Williams, James" <jiwilliams@mt.gov>
Cc: "Anderson, Neil" <NAnderson@mt.gov>

Thanks for the call today. I understand your interests and have passed that along to the planning team. The Cooperating Agency meeting that I mentioned in August is going to focus on the NBR, so we wont see you there. However, we will make sure that you both are included when the planning efforts are relevant to your priorities. Thanks

On Tue, Aug 1, 2017 at 10:16 AM, Williams, James <jiwilliams@mt.gov> wrote:

> Thanks Matt,
>
> Neil is our Wildlife Manager and he and I will both be your contacts for Lost Trail expansion and John Grant is our Ninepipe Wildlife Management Area Manager and is your contact for any neighbor to neighbor wetland project issues.
>
> As we discussed, we (FWP) defer to and support Dale Becker and his CSKT Wildlife Team on all USFWS projects on the Flathead Reservation, including the Bison Range. FWP does not need to be involved in any planning efforts for the Bison Range. Dale has a top shelf crew and they have always done great conservation work.
>
> Good luck with your planning and lets expand Lost Trail!
>
> Jim

--

Matthew McCollister
Wildlife Biologist
Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge

--
Matthew McCollister
Wildlife Biologist
Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge

From: Emmons, Diane
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: NBR CCP Meeting
Date: Thursday, August 3, 2017 11:50:36 AM

I could do either, but the 30th would be better. I'm assuming this would be a 2-night trip - is that right?

Diane (Dee) Emmons, Chief, Visitor Services and Outreach (VSO)
Region 6, National Wildlife Refuge System, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
303-236-4392 (Office) || 303-503-2418 (Mobile)

On Tue, Aug 1, 2017 at 9:56 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Dee,
>
> You've expressed interest in participating in the meeting we'll be having with the prospective cooperating agencies for the CCP for NBR.
>
> We dates we are looking at for that meeting are either August 29 or 30.
>
> Please let me know as soon as you can if any of those dates work for you.
>
> --
> **Bernardo Garza**
> **Planning Team Leader**
> **Branch of Policy and Planning**
> **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region**
> **Office (303) 236-4377**
> **Fax (303) 236-4792**

From: Hogan, Kelly
To: Brian Upton
Cc: Bernardo Garza; McCollister, Matthew
Subject: Re: FW: scoping comment
Date: Thursday, August 3, 2017 1:39:55 PM

Thanks Brian

That will work for us. We drafted the letter about the meeting and MOU yesterday. Will go out tomorrow.

Can you send us your phone number?

Thanks,
Kelly

On Thu, Aug 3, 2017 at 1:35 PM, Brian Upton <Brian.Upton@cskt.org> wrote:

> Toni and Kelly,
>
> I meant to follow up with respect to the email below. The Tribes are interesting in being a Cooperating Agency, but I do not believe we have formally provided that response to FWS yet. Please let me know whether this email will suffice, or if you need something more formal.
>
> If you have any tentative dates set for the Missoula scoping and cooperating agency meetings, please advise – I'd like to save those on my calendar even if the dates aren't finalized.
>
> Thank you,
>
> Brian
>
> **From:** Griffin, Toni [mailto:toni_griffin@fws.gov]
> **Sent:** Thursday, July 20, 2017 10:05 AM
> **To:** Brian Upton
> **Cc:** Kelly Hogan
> **Subject:** Re: FW: scoping comment
>
> Hi Brian,
>
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I've cc'd Kelly on this email so he can confirm the status of the CCP process and share any other details with you that he is aware of.

Take Care,

Toni

Toni Griffin

Currently On Detail

National Park Service

Division of Planning

Denver Service Center

12795 West Alameda Parkway

Denver, CO 80228

Office Phone: 303/969-2165

On Wed, Jul 19, 2017 at 11:12 AM, Brian Upton <Brian.Upton@cskt.org> wrote:

Hi Toni,

I know you were out of the office when I sent the email below (I got an automated out-of-

office reply). Hopefully you were able to get some R&R this summer. Could you let me know the status of: the comment period (whether it will be re-opened or extended); a Missoula scoping meeting; and a meeting of cooperating agencies?

Thanks,
BU

From: Brian Upton
Sent: Wednesday, June 21, 2017 2:39 PM
To: toni_griffin@fws.gov
Subject: scoping comment

Hi Toni,

It was good to see you up here in Montana. I haven't heard anything further as to whether FWS is seeking to extend or re-open the comment period for the revised notice of intent. Is that still in the works? Given your statements at the Polson and Kalispell scoping meetings about FWS accepting scoping comments beyond the June 19th deadline for both CCP's (NBR and the remainder of the NBRC complex), CSKT expects to submit its comments in the coming weeks.

Please also advise if there are any updates as to a Missoula scoping meeting or the August meeting of cooperating agencies.

Thanks,

BU

From:	Brian Upton
To:	Hogan, Kelly
Cc:	Bernardo Garza; McCollister, Matthew
Subject:	RE: FW: scoping comment
Date:	Thursday, August 3, 2017 1:53:57 PM

Thanks Kelly.

My office phone number is (406) 675-2700, x1165, or you could use (406) 275-2760 (Legal Department reception desk).

From: Hogan, Kelly [mailto:kelly_hogan@fws.gov]
Sent: Thursday, August 03, 2017 1:40 PM
To: Brian Upton
Cc: Bernardo Garza; McCollister, Matthew
Subject: Re: FW: scoping comment

Thanks Brian

That will work for us. We drafted the letter about the meeting and MOU yesterday. Will go out tomorrow.

Can you send us your phone number?

Thanks,
Kelly

On Thu, Aug 3, 2017 at 1:35 PM, Brian Upton <Brian.Upton@cskt.org> wrote:
Toni and Kelly,

I meant to follow up with respect to the email below. The Tribes are interesting in being a Cooperating Agency, but I do not believe we have formally provided that response to FWS yet. Please let me know whether this email will suffice, or if you need something more formal.

If you have any tentative dates set for the Missoula scoping and cooperating agency meetings, please advise – I'd like to save those on my calendar even if the dates aren't finalized.

Thank you,
Brian

From: Griffin, Toni [mailto:toni_griffin@fws.gov]
Sent: Thursday, July 20, 2017 10:05 AM
To: Brian Upton
Cc: Kelly Hogan
Subject: Re: FW: scoping comment

Hi Brian,

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meeting of cooperating agencies.

Thanks,
BU

From: McCollister, Matthew
To: Bernardo Garza
Subject: summary report for coop agencies
Date: Monday, August 7, 2017 10:39:23 AM
Attachments: Comment summary report.docx

Here is a 1 page summary

--
Matthew McCollister
Wildlife Biologist
Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge
Lewistown, MT

Comment Summary for National Bison Range CCP, 1/2017-7/2017

On January 18, 2017 the USFWS published a NOI in the Federal Register. In this notice, it stated that the Service would begin a CCP process for the National Bison Range that would result in an Environmental Impact Statement. The notice also specified a preferred alternative to transfer the NBR to CSKT. This notice received comment from 57 entities, from 49 individuals and 8 organizations. The comments are summarized below:

Count	Issue
47	Against transfer from FWS to CSKT
10	FWS is breaking policy, violating NEPA, and shouldrestart CCP process
8	In favor of a transfer from FWS to CSKT
6	CCP should include goals for improving wildlife and habitat resources
4	A transfer is not precedent setting, should be clearly stated as such
3	CCP should include goals for reducing invasive species
3	CCP consider economic impacts and/or increasing public use opportunity
3	CCP should include goals for cultural resources
3	A transfer is precedent setting
1	FWS should improve funding/staffing at NBR
1	CCP should improve cooperation/CSKT involvement in refuge programs

On May 18, 2017 the Service published a second NOI revising the previous notice. This revision stated that a CCP process would begin with public scoping to develop alternatives. Following this notice, FWS held 2 public meetings. On June 6 in Polson Montana, 12 members of the public attended and on Jun 7 in Kalispell 17 members of the public attended. Several individuals submitted written comments and signed up for the CCP mailing list. The May NOI scoping period has received comment from 18 entities (4 new individuals, 4 new organizations, 10 repeat comments). The topics covered in these additional comments are summarized in the table below; repeated comments by the same entity were not counted twice:

Count	Issue
3	CCP should include goals for improving wildlife and habitat resources
3	FWS should improve funding/staffing
3	CCP consider economic impacts and/or increasing public use opportunity
2	Against transfer from FWS to CSKT
2	For transfer from FWS to CSKT
2	CCP's primary focus should be on how to manage, not who
2	CCP should improve cooperation/CSKT involvement in refuge programs
1	NBR should manage bison like wildlife, not livestock
1	CCP should include goals for reducing invasive species
1	A transfer is not precedent setting, should be clearly stated as such
1	FWS is breaking policy, violating NEPA, restart CCP process

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Mountain-Prairie Region

IN REPLY REFER TO:
FWS/R6/NWRS/Planning
NBR Complex CCP 5.0
Mailstop 60130

MAILING ADDRESS:
P.O. Box 25486, DFC
Denver, Colorado 80225-0486

STREET LOCATION:
134 Union Boulevard
Lakewood, Colorado 80228-1807

Board of County Commissioners
Lake County
106 4th Avenue E
Polson, Montana 59860

AUG 4 2017

Dear Sirs:

I want to express my gratitude for agreeing to participate as a cooperating agency in the development of the Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the National Bison Range (NBR), located in Lake, and Sanders Counties, Montana. Your involvement will help us develop the best possible plan for future management of the NBR.

Per our recent communications with you, we need to move swiftly to schedule our first cooperating agency meeting. We are proposing a single day meeting during the last week in August, either on Tuesday (8/29), Wednesday (8/30) or Thursday (8/31). We are proposing meeting sites near NBR, such as the Ninepipes Lodge in Charlo, MT or (HOTEL) in Missoula MT. Please let Bernardo Garza know by Monday, **August 14**, your preference of date and location and we will do our best to accommodate your agency's needs. You may contact Bernardo via email at bernardo_garza@fws.gov or by telephone at (303) 236-4377.

Please find attached to this letter the meeting's agenda and a draft memorandum of understanding that we have prepared for your review prior to the meeting. Thank you and I look forward to seeing all of you at the cooperating agencies meeting in Montana later this month.

Sincerely,

Bernie Petersen
Refuge Supervisor, Mountain Zone

NBR CCP/EIS Cooperating Agencies Meeting

August 2017

AGENDA

9:00 am Introductions and meeting logistics; conversation on possible refuges tours

9:30 am Introduction to, discussion on, and implications of the CCP development process

- Presentation on the CCP development process:
  - Why does the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service develops CCPs
  - Steps of the CCP and EIS development process
  - "Side bars" of the planning process
  - CCP development schedule
  - Detailed discussion on the Planning Team
  - Discussion on Next Steps

10:30 am Short Break

10:45 am Presentation

- History of the refuge(s)
- Background information
- Habitats
- Current management

11:15 am Brainstorming on NBR Issues and Opportunities; Time for Q & A

12:30 pm Lunch break

1:30 pm Review and signature of Memorandum of Understanding

2:30 pm Tour of the Refuge(s)

4:30 pm End of tours and adjournment of meeting

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between the

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Fish and Wildlife Service
Bureau of Indian Affairs – Northwest Region

CONFEDERATED SALISH & KOOTENAI TRIBES

LAKE COUNTY
Lake County Board of Commissioners

SANDERS COUNTY
Sanders County Board of Commissioners

Concerning
Agency Cooperation on the National Bison Range
Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

I. Introduction

The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) requests the federal, counties, and Native American tribal governments listed above to be Cooperating Agencies in the development of the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the National Bison Range (NBR). The planning area for this CCP is the congressionally-designated NBR boundary located within the Flathead Indian Reservation in the Mission Valley, Lake and Sanders Counties, Montana.

The CCP/EIS process must comply with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) 42 U.S.C. Sec. 4321 and all subsequent regulations implementing NEPA (see Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)) regulations, 40 CFR Part 1500-1508, Department of the Interior (DOI) regulations 43 CFR part 46 and requirements listed in Departmental Manual 516 "Environmental Quality"). In addition, the Service is guided by the Fish and Wildlife Service Manual (602 FW3) on Comprehensive Conservation Planning. The Service also considered the CEQ *Memorandum for the Heads of Federal Agencies, Subject: Cooperating Agencies in Implementing the Procedural Requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act,* January 30, 2002 and the CEQ *Memorandum for Heads of Federal Agencies, Subject: Designation of Non-Federal Agencies to be Cooperating Agencies in Implementing the Procedural Requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act,* July 28, 1999, Executive Order 13352, August 26, 2004, Facilitation of Cooperative Conservation, and other CEQ, DOI, and Service guidance.

II. Purpose of Agreement

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to establish an agreement between the Service and the entities listed above regarding the roles and responsibilities of the agencies during the NEPA process. The Service will be the lead federal agency and the listed agencies will be Cooperating Agencies on the project.

III. Justification and Roles of Cooperating Agencies

A. Justification for Cooperating Agency Status

1. Each agency has been appointed as a Cooperating Agency because they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- the agency has jurisdiction by law of resources within the NBR
- the agency has specific areas of expertise/knowledge needed for completion of the CCP/EIS

2. Each Cooperating Agency agrees to provide information or data within their area(s) of expertise, attend planning team meetings, and review and comment on documents. Cooperating Agency status comes with an expectation that the Cooperating Agency will bring resources to the table to facilitate the timely completion of the NEPA process.

3. Nothing in this MOU shall obligate the Cooperating Agencies to expend appropriations or to enter into any contract or other obligation. Specific work projects or activities that involve the transfer of fund, service, or property between the parties to this MOU will require the execution of separate agreements or contracts, contingent upon the availability of funds as appropriated by Congress. Each subsequent agreement or arrangement involving the transfer of funds, services, or property shall be made in writing and shall be independently authorized by appropriate statutory authority and regulations, including those applicable to procurement activities.

4. The Cooperating Agencies agree to assist the Service in providing accurate information to the public (43 CFR 46.225 (a) – (d)). The CCP/EIS planning process for the NBR is intended to be transparent with all agencies, organizations, stakeholder groups and the general public. The Service regularly provides information about its planning process through planning updates, press releases, briefings, hard copies of documents, and posting documents on the Service's website. All information presented to the public must be approved for publication by the Service. The Service recognizes that other Federal agencies, county representatives, and Native American tribal government representatives must adhere to their public disclosure laws as necessary; however, releases of predecisional information (including working drafts) in a manner that purposely undermines or circumvents the spirit of this MOU, which is to develop a framework to work cooperatively in developing the CCP/EIS, or consistently misrepresents the planning process may be grounds to terminate the cooperating agency status. When information is received, the Service cannot agree to maintain confidentiality of this information except to the extent that is permitted under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and the Privacy Act of 1974.

B. Cooperating Agencies

Bureau of Indian Affairs, Northwest Region (BIANR)

- The Service provides an opportunity for other Federal agencies to serve on planning teams (Planning Policy, Fish and Wildlife Service Manual 602 FW3).
- BIANR has information and expertise that will assist the Service in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:
    - Federal government relationships with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and other Native American tribal governments
- BIANR will provide representatives to serve on the planning team.

Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes (CSKT)

- The Service provides an opportunity for Tribal Governments agencies to serve on planning teams (Planning Policy, Fish and Wildlife Service Manual 602 FW3).
- CSKT has information and expertise that will assist the Service in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:
    - Cultural resources management and conservation
    - Biological information on wildlife and habitat conditions
    - Fire management expertise
    - Socioeconomic conditions and trends in the planning area
    - Transportation
    - Land Use Information and Plans
    - Noxious or invasive weeds and invasive aquatic species
    - Tourism and visitor services
    - Public health issues
    - Emergency management and response
    - Law enforcement assistance and expertise

- CSKT shall assign representatives and designated alternates to speak on behalf of the Tribal Government. It is the responsibility of the assigned representatives to keep the CSKT Chairman and other Tribal Government officials briefed on the key developments of the CCP/EIS. To ensure consistency in communications, the same representatives shall serve for the duration of the project if at all possible. On occasion, other CSKT may be briefed on key developments in the planning process.

LAKE AND SANDERS COUNTIES (Counties)

Lake County Board of Commissioners
Sanders County Board of Commissioners

- The Counties and their agencies have information and expertise (Executive Order 13352) that will assist in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:
    - Socioeconomic conditions and trends in the planning area
    - Transportation
    - Land Use Information and Plans
    - Noxious or invasive weeds and aquatic invasive species
    - Tourism and visitor services
    - Public health issues
    - Emergency management and response
    - Law enforcement assistance and expertise
- The Counties shall assign representatives and designated alternates to speak on behalf of the Counties. It is the responsibility of the assigned representatives to keep the Board of County Commissioners for the Counties briefed on the key developments of the CCP/EIS. To ensure consistency in communications, the same representatives shall serve for the duration of the project if at all possible. On occasion, other County Commissioners may be briefed on key developments in the planning process.

C. Roles and Responsibilities

1. The agencies listed above understand that their Cooperating Agency status does not confer to them any special authority to change, edit, or veto all or part of the CCP or EIS.

2. In cases where a Cooperating Agency provides information it considers confidential, the Service will work with a Cooperating Agency to present the information in a manner that protects the rights of the Cooperating Agency before sharing the information necessary for the environmental analysis with the other Cooperating Agencies. The release of Service information to a State or local agency that includes proprietary or confidential information must be reviewed under FOIA and adhere to statutory and regulatory authorities. The parties to this MOU will have access to all information necessary for their Cooperating Agency participation in the environmental analysis to the extent permitted by applicable law. The parties agree not to release pre-decisional information (including working drafts) in a manner that undermines the Service's intent to provide accurate information to the public about its planning process as described under III. A. 4. When any of the Cooperating Agencies in this MOU must disclose information

under their disclosure laws, the Service requests notification of any public disclosure of CCP/EIS documents made by an agency to this agreement (43 CFR 46.225 (d)).

3. The Service possesses sole authority to direct the actions of its Contractors.

4. The Service is responsible for making all substantive decisions involving the CCP/EIS and is the final decision maker for disputes that may arise in the process. The Cooperating Agencies agree that, once such disputes are resolved, they will not be revisited. However, the Cooperating Agencies retain the right to comment on all issues related to the CCP/EIS, including those in dispute, through the normal NEPA process.

5. Veto or decision-making power does not accompany cooperating agency status. As the lead agency charged with carrying out the NEPA process under Section 102(2)(c) of NEPA, the Service retains sole decision-making authority over the CCP/EIS and its process.

6. The Service or Cooperating Agencies may terminate this agreement by providing written notice of the termination to the other parties.

IV. Authority

This memorandum is entered into under the following laws, authorities and regulations:
A. National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, PL 91-190, 42 U.S.C. 4321
B. Council of Environmental Quality NEPA Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508)
C. National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended (16USC 668dd et seq.) The act formally defines the mission of the Refuge System as the administration of *"a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitat within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans" (16 USC 668dd(a)(2)).*

V. Process and Procedure

1. The Service is the lead agency for ensuring full compliance of the CCP and EIS with the requirements of NEPA. Under applicable laws, rules, regulations, orders, and policies, the Service shall ensure that all necessary consultation and consideration is performed with all Federal, State, Local, and Tribal governments and private organizations.

2. The Service will coordinate and consult with the cooperating agencies throughout the preparation of the CCP/EIS, particularly during the scoping and the Draft CCP/EIS development and impact analysis. This consultation is to assess alternatives accurately; identify areas that require clarification; and to avoid, mitigate, or otherwise address impacts to the natural environment.

3. The Service has full responsibility for implementing procedures and regulations including, but not limited to, public review of the CCP/EIS, public distribution of the CCP/EIS, and required decision documentation.

4. The Service will arrange, announce, and conduct scoping meetings and will analyze the results.

5. The Service will meet with the Cooperating Agencies at least once during each strategic phase of the planning process (Scoping, Alternatives, Draft CCP/EIS, Final CCP/EIS) and more often if needed. All Cooperating Agencies may participate in discussions on the proposed action and on special or critical resource needs related to the plan. The Service will provide the Cooperating Agencies with opportunities to

review and comment on the preliminary Draft and Final CCP/EIS. The Cooperating Agencies will provide comments to the Service within the overall time schedule.

6. The Service will provide copies of correspondence to the Cooperating Agencies as it applies to their area(s) of expertise.

7. Through consultation with the Cooperating Agencies, the Service is responsible for selection of the Preferred Alternative and preparation of the Record of Decision. The Service's Regional Director for Region 6, Mountain-Prairie Region is the final decision maker for the Record of Decision.

8. The primary designated points of contacts for the Service shall be the NBR Complex Project Leader, Jeff King, and Planning Team Co-Leaders, Bernardo Garza and Toni Griffin (Region 6, Mountain-Prairie Region, Division of People, Policy and Planning, Branch of Planning, Lakewood, Colorado). Other NBR Complex staff personnel also serve on the planning team.
9. Each Cooperating Agency shall designate representatives to serve on the planning team. If the designated representative(s) is not able to fulfill the duties, the cooperating agency shall designate a new representative in writing to the Service. Given the three-year planning schedule, those contacts are not specifically identified in this MOU, but will be documented in Memorandum to the Files by the Planning Team Leaders of all planning team members and updated as necessary. In order to ensure the consistency in communications, the designated representatives should make every effort to attend planning team meetings over the length of the planning process.

10. The Cooperating Agencies shall provide responses to data requests and provide review comments to the Service.

11. The Service will document all meetings, emails, and phone conversations for inclusion in the Administrative Record for the CCP/EIS. The Service will maintain the official Administrative Record.

12. The Service will have primary responsibility for writing and rewriting all sections, parts, or chapters of the CCP/EIS and for reestablishing a schedule for completion of chapters consistent with the overall time schedule.

13. The Service will be the recipient of all comments on the CCP/EIS resulting from the review and comment periods.

13. Upon revision of the Draft CCP/EIS, the Service will provide the Cooperating Agencies with a list of the significant changes in the Final CCP/EIS.

VII. Administration

1. Modifications to this MOU may be proposed by the Cooperating Agencies and shall become effective upon the written approval of all parties. Changes to this MOU must be initialed and dated on each replacement page by an authorized agent of each party.

2. Any party may withdraw from this MOU after 30 days written notice of their intention to do so to the other parties.

3. Nothing in this agreement will be construed as limiting or affecting in any way the authority or responsibility of the Service or the Cooperating Agencies to perform within their authority.

4. This MOU is not intended to create, nor shall this MOU be construed or interpreted as creating, a binding or legally enforceable contract among the parties. The sole remedy for the failure of a party to fully comply with the provisions of this MOU shall be termination hereof.

This MOU will become effective upon the signature of all of its participants.

Approved

_____ _____

Jeff King, Project Leader, Date
National Bison Range Complex

_____ _____

Name and Title: Date
Bureau of Indian Affairs – Northwest Region

_____ _____

Name and Title: Date
Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes

_____ _____

Name and Title: Date
Lake County Board of Commissioners

_____ _____

Name and Title: Date
Sanders County Board of Commissioners

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	lakecommissioners@lakemt.gov
Subject:	Cooperative Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process
Date:	Monday, August 7, 2017 2:41:26 PM
Attachments:	Lake Co Invite Coop Ag Mtg.pdf NBR_CCP_EIS_Coop_Agencies_Mtg_Aug_2017.pdf Draft Coop Agencies MOU for NBR CCP and EIS.pdf

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Honorable County Commissioners,

Attached please find the electronic files of a letter of invitation (also being sent via postal service), the proposed agenda, and the draft memorandum of understanding included with this email message.

These documents are being provided to you, as representatives of an agency that has expressed interest in participating in the process to develop a comprehensive conservation plan (CCP) and an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the National Bison Range (NBR) in Moiese, Montana. We hope you will have the opportunity review the proposed Cooperative Agencies Meeting agenda and the draft Memorandum of Understanding and provide us with any comments you might have prior to the said meeting.

As soon as we have found the best date and place for the meeting, based on the input from all the cooperative agencies, we will communicate that information to you.

We look forward to working with the representatives of your agency in the development of the CCP and EIS for NBR.

Thank you.

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between the

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Fish and Wildlife Service
Bureau of Indian Affairs – Northwest Region

CONFEDERATED SALISH & KOOTENAI TRIBES

LAKE COUNTY
Lake County Board of Commissioners

SANDERS COUNTY
Sanders County Board of Commissioners

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Agency Cooperation on the National Bison Range
Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

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    - Cultural resources management and conservation
    - Biological information on wildlife and habitat conditions
    - Fire management expertise
    - Socioeconomic conditions and trends in the planning area
    - Transportation
    - Land Use Information and Plans
    - Noxious or invasive weeds and invasive aquatic species
    - Tourism and visitor services
    - Public health issues
    - Emergency management and response
    - Law enforcement assistance and expertise

- CSKT shall assign representatives and designated alternates to speak on behalf of the Tribal Government. It is the responsibility of the assigned representatives to keep the CSKT Chairman and other Tribal Government officials briefed on the key developments of the CCP/EIS. To ensure consistency in communications, the same representatives shall serve for the duration of the project if at all possible. On occasion, other CSKT may be briefed on key developments in the planning process.

LAKE AND SANDERS COUNTIES (Counties)

Lake County Board of Commissioners
Sanders County Board of Commissioners

- The Counties and their agencies have information and expertise (Executive Order 13352) that will assist in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:
    - Socioeconomic conditions and trends in the planning area
    - Transportation
    - Land Use Information and Plans
    - Noxious or invasive weeds and aquatic invasive species
    - Tourism and visitor services
    - Public health issues
    - Emergency management and response
    - Law enforcement assistance and expertise
- The Counties shall assign representatives and designated alternates to speak on behalf of the Counties. It is the responsibility of the assigned representatives to keep the Board of County Commissioners for the Counties briefed on the key developments of the CCP/EIS. To ensure consistency in communications, the same representatives shall serve for the duration of the project if at all possible. On occasion, other County Commissioners may be briefed on key developments in the planning process.

C. Roles and Responsibilities

1. The agencies listed above understand that their Cooperating Agency status does not confer to them any special authority to change, edit, or veto all or part of the CCP or EIS.

2. In cases where a Cooperating Agency provides information it considers confidential, the Service will work with a Cooperating Agency to present the information in a manner that protects the rights of the Cooperating Agency before sharing the information necessary for the environmental analysis with the other Cooperating Agencies. The release of Service information to a State or local agency that includes proprietary or confidential information must be reviewed under FOIA and adhere to statutory and regulatory authorities. The parties to this MOU will have access to all information necessary for their Cooperating Agency participation in the environmental analysis to the extent permitted by applicable law. The parties agree not to release pre-decisional information (including working drafts) in a manner that undermines the Service's intent to provide accurate information to the public about its planning process as described under III. A. 4. When any of the Cooperating Agencies in this MOU must disclose information

under their disclosure laws, the Service requests notification of any public disclosure of CCP/EIS documents made by an agency to this agreement (43 CFR 46.225 (d)).

3. The Service possesses sole authority to direct the actions of its Contractors.

4. The Service is responsible for making all substantive decisions involving the CCP/EIS and is the final decision maker for disputes that may arise in the process. The Cooperating Agencies agree that, once such disputes are resolved, they will not be revisited. However, the Cooperating Agencies retain the right to comment on all issues related to the CCP/EIS, including those in dispute, through the normal NEPA process.

5. Veto or decision-making power does not accompany cooperating agency status. As the lead agency charged with carrying out the NEPA process under Section 102(2)(c) of NEPA, the Service retains sole decision-making authority over the CCP/EIS and its process.

6. The Service or Cooperating Agencies may terminate this agreement by providing written notice of the termination to the other parties.

IV. Authority

This memorandum is entered into under the following laws, authorities and regulations:
A. National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, PL 91-190, 42 U.S.C. 4321
B. Council of Environmental Quality NEPA Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508)
C. National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended (16USC 668dd et seq.) The act formally defines the mission of the Refuge System as the administration of *"a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitat within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans" (16 USC 668dd(a)(2)).*

V. Process and Procedure

1. The Service is the lead agency for ensuring full compliance of the CCP and EIS with the requirements of NEPA. Under applicable laws, rules, regulations, orders, and policies, the Service shall ensure that all necessary consultation and consideration is performed with all Federal, State, Local, and Tribal governments and private organizations.

2. The Service will coordinate and consult with the cooperating agencies throughout the preparation of the CCP/EIS, particularly during the scoping and the Draft CCP/EIS development and impact analysis. This consultation is to assess alternatives accurately; identify areas that require clarification; and to avoid, mitigate, or otherwise address impacts to the natural environment.

3. The Service has full responsibility for implementing procedures and regulations including, but not limited to, public review of the CCP/EIS, public distribution of the CCP/EIS, and required decision documentation.

4. The Service will arrange, announce, and conduct scoping meetings and will analyze the results.

5. The Service will meet with the Cooperating Agencies at least once during each strategic phase of the planning process (Scoping, Alternatives, Draft CCP/EIS, Final CCP/EIS) and more often if needed. All Cooperating Agencies may participate in discussions on the proposed action and on special or critical resource needs related to the plan. The Service will provide the Cooperating Agencies with opportunities to

review and comment on the preliminary Draft and Final CCP/EIS. The Cooperating Agencies will provide comments to the Service within the overall time schedule.

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8. The primary designated points of contacts for the Service shall be the NBR Complex Project Leader, Jeff King, and Planning Team Co-Leaders, Bernardo Garza and Toni Griffin (Region 6, Mountain-Prairie Region, Division of People, Policy and Planning, Branch of Planning, Lakewood, Colorado). Other NBR Complex staff personnel also serve on the planning team.
9. Each Cooperating Agency shall designate representatives to serve on the planning team. If the designated representative(s) is not able to fulfill the duties, the cooperating agency shall designate a new representative in writing to the Service. Given the three-year planning schedule, those contacts are not specifically identified in this MOU, but will be documented in Memorandum to the Files by the Planning Team Leaders of all planning team members and updated as necessary. In order to ensure the consistency in communications, the designated representatives should make every effort to attend planning team meetings over the length of the planning process.

10. The Cooperating Agencies shall provide responses to data requests and provide review comments to the Service.

11. The Service will document all meetings, emails, and phone conversations for inclusion in the Administrative Record for the CCP/EIS. The Service will maintain the official Administrative Record.

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13. The Service will be the recipient of all comments on the CCP/EIS resulting from the review and comment periods.

13. Upon revision of the Draft CCP/EIS, the Service will provide the Cooperating Agencies with a list of the significant changes in the Final CCP/EIS.

VII. Administration

1. Modifications to this MOU may be proposed by the Cooperating Agencies and shall become effective upon the written approval of all parties. Changes to this MOU must be initialed and dated on each replacement page by an authorized agent of each party.

2. Any party may withdraw from this MOU after 30 days written notice of their intention to do so to the other parties.

3. Nothing in this agreement will be construed as limiting or affecting in any way the authority or responsibility of the Service or the Cooperating Agencies to perform within their authority.

4. This MOU is not intended to create, nor shall this MOU be construed or interpreted as creating, a binding or legally enforceable contract among the parties. The sole remedy for the failure of a party to fully comply with the provisions of this MOU shall be termination hereof.

This MOU will become effective upon the signature of all of its participants.

Approved

_____ _____

Jeff King, Project Leader, Date
National Bison Range Complex

_____ _____

Name and Title: Date
Bureau of Indian Affairs – Northwest Region

_____ _____

Name and Title: Date
Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes

_____ _____

Name and Title: Date
Lake County Board of Commissioners

_____ _____

Name and Title: Date
Sanders County Board of Commissioners

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Mountain-Prairie Region

IN REPLY REFER TO:
FWS/R6/NWRS/Planning
NBR Complex CCP 5.0
Mailstop 60130

MAILING ADDRESS:
P.O. Box 25486, DFC
Denver, Colorado 80225-0486

STREET LOCATION:
134 Union Boulevard
Lakewood, Colorado 80228-1807

Brian Upton
Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes
P.O. Box 278
Pablo, Montana 59855

AUG 4 2017

Dear Mr. Upton,

I want to express my gratitude for agreeing to participate as a cooperating agency in the development of the Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the National Bison Range (NBR), located in Lake, and Sanders Counties, Montana. Your involvement will help us develop the best possible plan for future management of the NBR.

Per our recent communications with you, we need to move swiftly to schedule our first cooperating agency meeting. We are proposing a single day meeting during the last week in August, either on Tuesday (8/29), Wednesday (8/30) or Thursday (8/31). We are proposing meeting sites near NBR, such as the Ninepipes Lodge in Charlo, MT or (HOTEL) in Missoula MT. Please let Bernardo Garza know by Monday, **August 14**, your preference of date and location and we will do our best to accommodate your agency's needs. You may contact Bernardo via email at bernardo_garza@fws.gov or by telephone at (303) 236-4377.

Please find attached to this letter the meeting's agenda and a draft memorandum of understanding that we have prepared for your review prior to the meeting. Thank you and I look forward to seeing all of you at the cooperating agencies meeting in Montana later this month.

Sincerely,

Bernie Petersen
Refuge Supervisor, Mountain Zone

NBR CCP/EIS Cooperating Agencies Meeting

August 2017

AGENDA

9:00 am Introductions and meeting logistics; conversation on possible refuges tours

9:30 am Introduction to, discussion on, and implications of the CCP development process

- Presentation on the CCP development process:
  - Why does the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service develops CCPs
  - Steps of the CCP and EIS development process
  - "Side bars" of the planning process
  - CCP development schedule
  - Detailed discussion on the Planning Team
  - Discussion on Next Steps

10:30 am Short Break

10:45 am Presentation

- History of the refuge(s)
- Background information
- Habitats
- Current management

11:15 am Brainstorming on NBR Issues and Opportunities; Time for Q & A

12:30 pm Lunch break

1:30 pm Review and signature of Memorandum of Understanding

2:30 pm Tour of the Refuge(s)

4:30 pm End of tours and adjournment of meeting

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Brian Upton
Subject:	Cooperative Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process
Date:	Monday, August 7, 2017 2:42:49 PM
Attachments:	Draft Coop Agencies MOU for NBR CCP and EIS.pdf CSKT Invite Coop Ag Mtg.pdf NBR_CCP_EIS_Coop_Agencies_Mtg_Aug_2017.pdf

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Attached please find the electronic files of a letter of invitation (also being sent via postal service), the proposed agenda, and the draft memorandum of understanding included with this email message.

These documents are being provided to you, as representative of an agency that has expressed interest in participating in the process to develop a comprehensive conservation plan (CCP) and an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the National Bison Range (NBR) in Moiese, Montana. We hope you will review the proposed Cooperative Agencies Meeting agenda and the draft Memorandum of Understanding and provide us with any comments you might have prior to the said meeting.

As soon as we have found the best date and place for the meeting, based on the input from all the cooperative agencies, we will communicate that information to you.

We look forward to working with you and any other representatives of your agency in the development of the CCP and EIS for NBR.

Thank you.

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

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August 2017

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United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Mountain-Prairie Region

IN REPLY REFER TO:
FWS/R6/NWRS/Planning
NBR Complex CCP 5.0
Mailstop 60130

MAILING ADDRESS:
P.O. Box 25486, DFC
Denver, Colorado 80225-0486

STREET LOCATION:
134 Union Boulevard
Lakewood, Colorado 80228-1807

David Redhorse
Northwest Regional Office
Bureau of Indian Affairs
911 Northeast 11th Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97232-4169

AUG 4 2017

Dear Mr. Redhorse:

I want to express my gratitude for agreeing to participate as a cooperating agency in the development of the Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the National Bison Range (NBR), located in Lake, and Sanders Counties, Montana. Your involvement will help us develop the best possible plan for future management of the NBR.

Per our recent communications with you, we need to move swiftly to schedule our first cooperating agency meeting. We are proposing a single day meeting during the last week in August, either on Tuesday (8/29), Wednesday (8/30) or Thursday (8/31). We are proposing meeting sites near NBR, such as the Ninepipes Lodge in Charlo, MT or (HOTEL) in Missoula MT. Please let Bernardo Garza know by Monday, **August 14**, your preference of date and location and we will do our best to accommodate your agency's needs. You may contact Bernardo via email at bernardo_garza@fws.gov or by telephone at (303) 236-4377.

Please find attached to this letter the meeting's agenda and a draft memorandum of understanding that we have prepared for your review prior to the meeting. Thank you and I look forward to seeing all of you at the cooperating agencies meeting in Montana later this month.

Sincerely,

Bernie Petersen
Refuge Supervisor, Mountain Zone

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between the

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Fish and Wildlife Service
Bureau of Indian Affairs – Northwest Region

CONFEDERATED SALISH & KOOTENAI TRIBES

LAKE COUNTY
Lake County Board of Commissioners

SANDERS COUNTY
Sanders County Board of Commissioners

Concerning
Agency Cooperation on the National Bison Range
Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

I. Introduction

The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) requests the federal, counties, and Native American tribal governments listed above to be Cooperating Agencies in the development of the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the National Bison Range (NBR). The planning area for this CCP is the congressionally-designated NBR boundary located within the Flathead Indian Reservation in the Mission Valley, Lake and Sanders Counties, Montana.

The CCP/EIS process must comply with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) 42 U.S.C. Sec. 4321 and all subsequent regulations implementing NEPA (see Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)) regulations, 40 CFR Part 1500-1508, Department of the Interior (DOI) regulations 43 CFR part 46 and requirements listed in Departmental Manual 516 "Environmental Quality"). In addition, the Service is guided by the Fish and Wildlife Service Manual (602 FW3) on Comprehensive Conservation Planning. The Service also considered the CEQ *Memorandum for the Heads of Federal Agencies, Subject: Cooperating Agencies in Implementing the Procedural Requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act,* January 30, 2002 and the CEQ *Memorandum for Heads of Federal Agencies, Subject: Designation of Non-Federal Agencies to be Cooperating Agencies in Implementing the Procedural Requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act,* July 28, 1999, Executive Order 13352, August 26, 2004, Facilitation of Cooperative Conservation, and other CEQ, DOI, and Service guidance.

II. Purpose of Agreement

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to establish an agreement between the Service and the entities listed above regarding the roles and responsibilities of the agencies during the NEPA process. The Service will be the lead federal agency and the listed agencies will be Cooperating Agencies on the project.

III. Justification and Roles of Cooperating Agencies

A. Justification for Cooperating Agency Status

1. Each agency has been appointed as a Cooperating Agency because they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- the agency has jurisdiction by law of resources within the NBR
- the agency has specific areas of expertise/knowledge needed for completion of the CCP/EIS

2. Each Cooperating Agency agrees to provide information or data within their area(s) of expertise, attend planning team meetings, and review and comment on documents. Cooperating Agency status comes with an expectation that the Cooperating Agency will bring resources to the table to facilitate the timely completion of the NEPA process.

3. Nothing in this MOU shall obligate the Cooperating Agencies to expend appropriations or to enter into any contract or other obligation. Specific work projects or activities that involve the transfer of fund, service, or property between the parties to this MOU will require the execution of separate agreements or contracts, contingent upon the availability of funds as appropriated by Congress. Each subsequent agreement or arrangement involving the transfer of funds, services, or property shall be made in writing and shall be independently authorized by appropriate statutory authority and regulations, including those applicable to procurement activities.

4. The Cooperating Agencies agree to assist the Service in providing accurate information to the public (43 CFR 46.225 (a) – (d)). The CCP/EIS planning process for the NBR is intended to be transparent with all agencies, organizations, stakeholder groups and the general public. The Service regularly provides information about its planning process through planning updates, press releases, briefings, hard copies of documents, and posting documents on the Service's website. All information presented to the public must be approved for publication by the Service. The Service recognizes that other Federal agencies, county representatives, and Native American tribal government representatives must adhere to their public disclosure laws as necessary; however, releases of predecisional information (including working drafts) in a manner that purposely undermines or circumvents the spirit of this MOU, which is to develop a framework to work cooperatively in developing the CCP/EIS, or consistently misrepresents the planning process may be grounds to terminate the cooperating agency status. When information is received, the Service cannot agree to maintain confidentiality of this information except to the extent that is permitted under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and the Privacy Act of 1974.

B. Cooperating Agencies

Bureau of Indian Affairs, Northwest Region (BIANR)

- The Service provides an opportunity for other Federal agencies to serve on planning teams (Planning Policy, Fish and Wildlife Service Manual 602 FW3).
- BIANR has information and expertise that will assist the Service in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:
    - Federal government relationships with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and other Native American tribal governments
- BIANR will provide representatives to serve on the planning team.

Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes (CSKT)

- The Service provides an opportunity for Tribal Governments agencies to serve on planning teams (Planning Policy, Fish and Wildlife Service Manual 602 FW3).
- CSKT has information and expertise that will assist the Service in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:
    - Cultural resources management and conservation
    - Biological information on wildlife and habitat conditions
    - Fire management expertise
    - Socioeconomic conditions and trends in the planning area
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    - Land Use Information and Plans
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- CSKT shall assign representatives and designated alternates to speak on behalf of the Tribal Government. It is the responsibility of the assigned representatives to keep the CSKT Chairman and other Tribal Government officials briefed on the key developments of the CCP/EIS. To ensure consistency in communications, the same representatives shall serve for the duration of the project if at all possible. On occasion, other CSKT may be briefed on key developments in the planning process.

LAKE AND SANDERS COUNTIES (Counties)

Lake County Board of Commissioners
Sanders County Board of Commissioners

- The Counties and their agencies have information and expertise (Executive Order 13352) that will assist in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:
    - Socioeconomic conditions and trends in the planning area
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C. Roles and Responsibilities

1. The agencies listed above understand that their Cooperating Agency status does not confer to them any special authority to change, edit, or veto all or part of the CCP or EIS.

2. In cases where a Cooperating Agency provides information it considers confidential, the Service will work with a Cooperating Agency to present the information in a manner that protects the rights of the Cooperating Agency before sharing the information necessary for the environmental analysis with the other Cooperating Agencies. The release of Service information to a State or local agency that includes proprietary or confidential information must be reviewed under FOIA and adhere to statutory and regulatory authorities. The parties to this MOU will have access to all information necessary for their Cooperating Agency participation in the environmental analysis to the extent permitted by applicable law. The parties agree not to release pre-decisional information (including working drafts) in a manner that undermines the Service's intent to provide accurate information to the public about its planning process as described under III. A. 4. When any of the Cooperating Agencies in this MOU must disclose information

under their disclosure laws, the Service requests notification of any public disclosure of CCP/EIS documents made by an agency to this agreement (43 CFR 46.225 (d)).

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Approved

_____ _____

Jeff King, Project Leader, Date
National Bison Range Complex

_____ _____

Name and Title: Date
Bureau of Indian Affairs – Northwest Region

_____ _____

Name and Title: Date
Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes

_____ _____

Name and Title: Date
Lake County Board of Commissioners

_____ _____

Name and Title: Date
Sanders County Board of Commissioners

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	David Redhorse
Subject:	Cooperative Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process
Date:	Monday, August 7, 2017 2:44:10 PM
Attachments:	NBR_CCP_EIS_Coop_Agencies_Mtg_Aug_2017.pdf BIA NWRO Invite Coop Ag Mtg.pdf Draft Coop Agencies MOU for NBR CCP and EIS.pdf

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Thank you.

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Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between the

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Fish and Wildlife Service
Bureau of Indian Affairs – Northwest Region

CONFEDERATED SALISH & KOOTENAI TRIBES

LAKE COUNTY
Lake County Board of Commissioners

SANDERS COUNTY
Sanders County Board of Commissioners

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Agency Cooperation on the National Bison Range
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I. Introduction

The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) requests the federal, counties, and Native American tribal governments listed above to be Cooperating Agencies in the development of the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the National Bison Range (NBR). The planning area for this CCP is the congressionally-designated NBR boundary located within the Flathead Indian Reservation in the Mission Valley, Lake and Sanders Counties, Montana.

The CCP/EIS process must comply with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) 42 U.S.C. Sec. 4321 and all subsequent regulations implementing NEPA (see Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)) regulations, 40 CFR Part 1500-1508, Department of the Interior (DOI) regulations 43 CFR part 46 and requirements listed in Departmental Manual 516 "Environmental Quality"). In addition, the Service is guided by the Fish and Wildlife Service Manual (602 FW3) on Comprehensive Conservation Planning. The Service also considered the CEQ *Memorandum for the Heads of Federal Agencies, Subject: Cooperating Agencies in Implementing the Procedural Requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act,* January 30, 2002 and the CEQ *Memorandum for Heads of Federal Agencies, Subject: Designation of Non-Federal Agencies to be Cooperating Agencies in Implementing the Procedural Requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act,* July 28, 1999, Executive Order 13352, August 26, 2004, Facilitation of Cooperative Conservation, and other CEQ, DOI, and Service guidance.

II. Purpose of Agreement

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to establish an agreement between the Service and the entities listed above regarding the roles and responsibilities of the agencies during the NEPA process. The Service will be the lead federal agency and the listed agencies will be Cooperating Agencies on the project.

III. Justification and Roles of Cooperating Agencies

A. Justification for Cooperating Agency Status

1. Each agency has been appointed as a Cooperating Agency because they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- the agency has jurisdiction by law of resources within the NBR
- the agency has specific areas of expertise/knowledge needed for completion of the CCP/EIS

2. Each Cooperating Agency agrees to provide information or data within their area(s) of expertise, attend planning team meetings, and review and comment on documents. Cooperating Agency status comes with an expectation that the Cooperating Agency will bring resources to the table to facilitate the timely completion of the NEPA process.

3. Nothing in this MOU shall obligate the Cooperating Agencies to expend appropriations or to enter into any contract or other obligation. Specific work projects or activities that involve the transfer of fund, service, or property between the parties to this MOU will require the execution of separate agreements or contracts, contingent upon the availability of funds as appropriated by Congress. Each subsequent agreement or arrangement involving the transfer of funds, services, or property shall be made in writing and shall be independently authorized by appropriate statutory authority and regulations, including those applicable to procurement activities.

4. The Cooperating Agencies agree to assist the Service in providing accurate information to the public (43 CFR 46.225 (a) – (d)). The CCP/EIS planning process for the NBR is intended to be transparent with all agencies, organizations, stakeholder groups and the general public. The Service regularly provides information about its planning process through planning updates, press releases, briefings, hard copies of documents, and posting documents on the Service's website. All information presented to the public must be approved for publication by the Service. The Service recognizes that other Federal agencies, county representatives, and Native American tribal government representatives must adhere to their public disclosure laws as necessary; however, releases of predecisional information (including working drafts) in a manner that purposely undermines or circumvents the spirit of this MOU, which is to develop a framework to work cooperatively in developing the CCP/EIS, or consistently misrepresents the planning process may be grounds to terminate the cooperating agency status. When information is received, the Service cannot agree to maintain confidentiality of this information except to the extent that is permitted under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and the Privacy Act of 1974.

B. Cooperating Agencies

Bureau of Indian Affairs, Northwest Region (BIANR)

- The Service provides an opportunity for other Federal agencies to serve on planning teams (Planning Policy, Fish and Wildlife Service Manual 602 FW3).
- BIANR has information and expertise that will assist the Service in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:
    - Federal government relationships with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and other Native American tribal governments
- BIANR will provide representatives to serve on the planning team.

Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes (CSKT)

- The Service provides an opportunity for Tribal Governments agencies to serve on planning teams (Planning Policy, Fish and Wildlife Service Manual 602 FW3).
- CSKT has information and expertise that will assist the Service in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:
    - Cultural resources management and conservation
    - Biological information on wildlife and habitat conditions
    - Fire management expertise
    - Socioeconomic conditions and trends in the planning area
    - Transportation
    - Land Use Information and Plans
    - Noxious or invasive weeds and invasive aquatic species
    - Tourism and visitor services
    - Public health issues
    - Emergency management and response
    - Law enforcement assistance and expertise

- CSKT shall assign representatives and designated alternates to speak on behalf of the Tribal Government. It is the responsibility of the assigned representatives to keep the CSKT Chairman and other Tribal Government officials briefed on the key developments of the CCP/EIS. To ensure consistency in communications, the same representatives shall serve for the duration of the project if at all possible. On occasion, other CSKT may be briefed on key developments in the planning process.

LAKE AND SANDERS COUNTIES (Counties)

Lake County Board of Commissioners
Sanders County Board of Commissioners

- The Counties and their agencies have information and expertise (Executive Order 13352) that will assist in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:
    - Socioeconomic conditions and trends in the planning area
    - Transportation
    - Land Use Information and Plans
    - Noxious or invasive weeds and aquatic invasive species
    - Tourism and visitor services
    - Public health issues
    - Emergency management and response
    - Law enforcement assistance and expertise
- The Counties shall assign representatives and designated alternates to speak on behalf of the Counties. It is the responsibility of the assigned representatives to keep the Board of County Commissioners for the Counties briefed on the key developments of the CCP/EIS. To ensure consistency in communications, the same representatives shall serve for the duration of the project if at all possible. On occasion, other County Commissioners may be briefed on key developments in the planning process.

C. Roles and Responsibilities

1. The agencies listed above understand that their Cooperating Agency status does not confer to them any special authority to change, edit, or veto all or part of the CCP or EIS.

2. In cases where a Cooperating Agency provides information it considers confidential, the Service will work with a Cooperating Agency to present the information in a manner that protects the rights of the Cooperating Agency before sharing the information necessary for the environmental analysis with the other Cooperating Agencies. The release of Service information to a State or local agency that includes proprietary or confidential information must be reviewed under FOIA and adhere to statutory and regulatory authorities. The parties to this MOU will have access to all information necessary for their Cooperating Agency participation in the environmental analysis to the extent permitted by applicable law. The parties agree not to release pre-decisional information (including working drafts) in a manner that undermines the Service's intent to provide accurate information to the public about its planning process as described under III. A. 4. When any of the Cooperating Agencies in this MOU must disclose information

under their disclosure laws, the Service requests notification of any public disclosure of CCP/EIS documents made by an agency to this agreement (43 CFR 46.225 (d)).

3. The Service possesses sole authority to direct the actions of its Contractors.

4. The Service is responsible for making all substantive decisions involving the CCP/EIS and is the final decision maker for disputes that may arise in the process. The Cooperating Agencies agree that, once such disputes are resolved, they will not be revisited. However, the Cooperating Agencies retain the right to comment on all issues related to the CCP/EIS, including those in dispute, through the normal NEPA process.

5. Veto or decision-making power does not accompany cooperating agency status. As the lead agency charged with carrying out the NEPA process under Section 102(2)(c) of NEPA, the Service retains sole decision-making authority over the CCP/EIS and its process.

6. The Service or Cooperating Agencies may terminate this agreement by providing written notice of the termination to the other parties.

IV. Authority

This memorandum is entered into under the following laws, authorities and regulations:
A. National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, PL 91-190, 42 U.S.C. 4321
B. Council of Environmental Quality NEPA Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508)
C. National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended (16USC 668dd et seq.) The act formally defines the mission of the Refuge System as the administration of *"a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitat within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans" (16 USC 668dd(a)(2)).*

V. Process and Procedure

1. The Service is the lead agency for ensuring full compliance of the CCP and EIS with the requirements of NEPA. Under applicable laws, rules, regulations, orders, and policies, the Service shall ensure that all necessary consultation and consideration is performed with all Federal, State, Local, and Tribal governments and private organizations.

2. The Service will coordinate and consult with the cooperating agencies throughout the preparation of the CCP/EIS, particularly during the scoping and the Draft CCP/EIS development and impact analysis. This consultation is to assess alternatives accurately; identify areas that require clarification; and to avoid, mitigate, or otherwise address impacts to the natural environment.

3. The Service has full responsibility for implementing procedures and regulations including, but not limited to, public review of the CCP/EIS, public distribution of the CCP/EIS, and required decision documentation.

4. The Service will arrange, announce, and conduct scoping meetings and will analyze the results.

5. The Service will meet with the Cooperating Agencies at least once during each strategic phase of the planning process (Scoping, Alternatives, Draft CCP/EIS, Final CCP/EIS) and more often if needed. All Cooperating Agencies may participate in discussions on the proposed action and on special or critical resource needs related to the plan. The Service will provide the Cooperating Agencies with opportunities to

review and comment on the preliminary Draft and Final CCP/EIS. The Cooperating Agencies will provide comments to the Service within the overall time schedule.

6. The Service will provide copies of correspondence to the Cooperating Agencies as it applies to their area(s) of expertise.

7. Through consultation with the Cooperating Agencies, the Service is responsible for selection of the Preferred Alternative and preparation of the Record of Decision. The Service's Regional Director for Region 6, Mountain-Prairie Region is the final decision maker for the Record of Decision.

8. The primary designated points of contacts for the Service shall be the NBR Complex Project Leader, Jeff King, and Planning Team Co-Leaders, Bernardo Garza and Toni Griffin (Region 6, Mountain-Prairie Region, Division of People, Policy and Planning, Branch of Planning, Lakewood, Colorado). Other NBR Complex staff personnel also serve on the planning team.
9. Each Cooperating Agency shall designate representatives to serve on the planning team. If the designated representative(s) is not able to fulfill the duties, the cooperating agency shall designate a new representative in writing to the Service. Given the three-year planning schedule, those contacts are not specifically identified in this MOU, but will be documented in Memorandum to the Files by the Planning Team Leaders of all planning team members and updated as necessary. In order to ensure the consistency in communications, the designated representatives should make every effort to attend planning team meetings over the length of the planning process.

10. The Cooperating Agencies shall provide responses to data requests and provide review comments to the Service.

11. The Service will document all meetings, emails, and phone conversations for inclusion in the Administrative Record for the CCP/EIS. The Service will maintain the official Administrative Record.

12. The Service will have primary responsibility for writing and rewriting all sections, parts, or chapters of the CCP/EIS and for reestablishing a schedule for completion of chapters consistent with the overall time schedule.

13. The Service will be the recipient of all comments on the CCP/EIS resulting from the review and comment periods.

13. Upon revision of the Draft CCP/EIS, the Service will provide the Cooperating Agencies with a list of the significant changes in the Final CCP/EIS.

VII. Administration

1. Modifications to this MOU may be proposed by the Cooperating Agencies and shall become effective upon the written approval of all parties. Changes to this MOU must be initialed and dated on each replacement page by an authorized agent of each party.

2. Any party may withdraw from this MOU after 30 days written notice of their intention to do so to the other parties.

3. Nothing in this agreement will be construed as limiting or affecting in any way the authority or responsibility of the Service or the Cooperating Agencies to perform within their authority.

4. This MOU is not intended to create, nor shall this MOU be construed or interpreted as creating, a binding or legally enforceable contract among the parties. The sole remedy for the failure of a party to fully comply with the provisions of this MOU shall be termination hereof.

This MOU will become effective upon the signature of all of its participants.

Approved

_____ _____

Jeff King, Project Leader, Date
National Bison Range Complex

_____ _____

Name and Title: Date
Bureau of Indian Affairs – Northwest Region

_____ _____

Name and Title: Date
Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes

_____ _____

Name and Title: Date
Lake County Board of Commissioners

_____ _____

Name and Title: Date
Sanders County Board of Commissioners

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Mountain-Prairie Region

IN REPLY REFER TO:
FWS/R6/NWRS/Planning
NBR Complex CCP 5.0
Mailstop 60130

MAILING ADDRESS:
P.O. Box 25486, DFC
Denver, Colorado 80225-0486

STREET LOCATION:
134 Union Boulevard
Lakewood, Colorado 80228-1807

Carol Brooker, Presiding Officer
Sanders County Board of County Commissioners
1111 West Main Street
Thompson Falls, Montana 59873

AUG 4 2017

Dear Carol,

I want to express my gratitude for agreeing to participate as a cooperating agency in the development of the Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the National Bison Range (NBR), located in Lake, and Sanders Counties, Montana. Your involvement will help us develop the best possible plan for future management of the NBR.

Per our recent communications with you, we need to move swiftly to schedule our first cooperating agency meeting. We are proposing a single day meeting during the last week in August, either on Tuesday (8/29), Wednesday (8/30) or Thursday (8/31). We are proposing meeting sites near NBR, such as the Ninepipes Lodge in Charlo, MT or (HOTEL) in Missoula MT. Please let Bernardo Garza know by Monday, **August 14**, your preference of date and location and we will do our best to accommodate your agency's needs. You may contact Bernardo via email at bernardo_garza@fws.gov or by telephone at (303) 236-4377.

Please find attached to this letter the meeting's agenda and a draft memorandum of understanding that we have prepared for your review prior to the meeting. Thank you and I look forward to seeing all of you at the cooperating agencies meeting in Montana later this month.

Sincerely,

Bernie Petersen
Refuge Supervisor, Mountain Zone

NBR CCP/EIS Cooperating Agencies Meeting

August 2017

AGENDA

9:00 am Introductions and meeting logistics; conversation on possible refuges tours

9:30 am Introduction to, discussion on, and implications of the CCP development process

- Presentation on the CCP development process:
  - Why does the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service develops CCPs
  - Steps of the CCP and EIS development process
  - "Side bars" of the planning process
  - CCP development schedule
  - Detailed discussion on the Planning Team
  - Discussion on Next Steps

10:30 am Short Break

10:45 am Presentation

- History of the refuge(s)
- Background information
- Habitats
- Current management

11:15 am Brainstorming on NBR Issues and Opportunities; Time for Q & A

12:30 pm Lunch break

1:30 pm Review and signature of Memorandum of Understanding

2:30 pm Tour of the Refuge(s)

4:30 pm End of tours and adjournment of meeting

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	cbrooker@co.sanders.mt.us
Subject:	Cooperating Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process
Date:	Monday, August 7, 2017 2:47:32 PM
Attachments:	Draft Coop Agencies MOU for NBR CCP and EIS.pdf Sander Co Invite Coop Ag Mtg.pdf NBR_CCP_EIS_Coop_Agencies_Mtg_Aug_2017.pdf

---

Honorable Commissioner Brooker,

Attached please find the electronic files of a letter of invitation (also being sent via postal service), the proposed agenda, and the draft memorandum of understanding included with this email message.

These documents are being provided to you, as representative of an agency that has expressed interest in participating in the process to develop a comprehensive conservation plan (CCP) and an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the National Bison Range (NBR) in Moiese, Montana. We hope you will review the proposed Cooperative Agencies Meeting agenda and the draft Memorandum of Understanding and provide us with any comments you might have prior to the said meeting.

As soon as we have found the best date and place for the meeting, based on the input from all the cooperative agencies, we will communicate that information to you.

We look forward to working with you and any other representatives of your agency in the development of the CCP and EIS for NBR.

Thank you.

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From:	Gale Decker
To:	Garza, Bernardo
Cc:	Lake County Commissioners
Subject:	RE: Cooperative Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process
Date:	Tuesday, August 8, 2017 9:07:10 AM

Good morning Bernado,

Lake County's preference for meeting date is Tuesday, August 29. Ninepipes would be preferred, but will attend anywhere.

Thank you,

Gale Decker

Lake County Commissioner

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Monday, August 07, 2017 2:41 PM
To: Lake County Commissioners
Subject: Cooperative Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process

Honorable County Commissioners,

Attached please find the electronic files of a letter of invitation (also being sent via postal service), the proposed agenda, and the draft memorandum of understanding included with this email message.

These documents are being provided to you, as representatives of an agency that has expressed interest in participating in the process to develop a comprehensive conservation plan (CCP) and an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the National Bison Range (NBR) in Moiese, Montana. We hope you will have the opportunity review the proposed Cooperative Agencies Meeting agenda and the draft Memorandum of Understanding and provide us with any comments you might have prior to the said meeting.

As soon as we have found the best date and place for the meeting, based on the input from all the cooperative agencies, we will communicate that information to you.

We look forward to working with the representatives of your agency in the development of the CCP and EIS for NBR.

Thank you.

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Gale Decker
Subject: Re: Cooperative Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process
Date: Tuesday, August 8, 2017 9:14:16 AM

Gale,

Thank you very much for letting me know.

I will confirm to you the date and place of the meeting.

Have a wonderful day.

Bernardo Garza

On Tue, Aug 8, 2017 at 9:03 AM, Gale Decker <gdecker@lakemt.gov> wrote:

> Good morning Bernado,
>
> Lake County's preference for meeting date is Tuesday, August 29. Ninepipes would be preferred, but will attend anywhere.
>
> Thank you,
>
> Gale Decker
>
> Lake County Commissioner
>
> **From:** Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
> **Sent:** Monday, August 07, 2017 2:41 PM
> **To:** Lake County Commissioners
> **Subject:** Cooperative Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process
>
> Honorable County Commissioners,
>
> Attached please find the electronic files of a letter of invitation (also being sent via postal service), the proposed agenda, and the draft memorandum of understanding included with this email message.
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As soon as we have found the best date and place for the meeting, based on the input from all the cooperative agencies, we will communicate that information to you.

We look forward to working with the representatives of your agency in the development of the CCP and EIS for NBR.

Thank you.

--

Bernardo Garza

Planning Team Leader

Branch of Policy and Planning

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region

Office (303) 236-4377

Fax (303) 236-4792

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Jennifer Ekberg
To: bernardo_garza@fws.gov
Subject: Meeting Time: Cooperating Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process
Date: Tuesday, August 8, 2017 11:57:55 AM
Importance: High

Good Morning Mr. Garza,

The Sanders County Commissioners would like to recommend the meeting date of Thursday, August 31st in Charlo, MT.

Thank you,

Jennifer Ekberg
Administrative Assistant
Board of Commissioners
Sanders County, Montana
P.O. Box 519
Thompson Falls, MT 59873
Ph. (406) 827-6966
Fax (406) 827-4388

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From: Carol Brooker
Sent: Monday, August 07, 2017 4:01 PM
To: Jennifer Ekberg <jekberg@co.sanders.mt.us>
Subject: Fwd: Cooperating Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process

We need to look at this tomorrow

Sent from my iPhone
Carol A. Brooker
Sanders County Commissioner District # 1
PO Box 519
Thompson Falls, Mt. 59873
Work: 406-827-6913

Cell: 406-274-2738
Cbrooker@co.sanders.mt.us

Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** "Garza, Bernardo" <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>
> **Date:** August 7, 2017 at 2:47:32 PM MDT
> **To:** <cbrooker@co.sanders.mt.us>
> **Subject: Cooperating Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process**
>
> Honorable Commissioner Brooker,
>
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> As soon as we have found the best date and place for the meeting, based on the input from all the cooperative agencies, we will communicate that information to you.
>
> We look forward to working with you and any other representatives of your agency in the development of the CCP and EIS for NBR.
>
> Thank you.
>
> --
> **Bernardo Garza**
> **Planning Team Leader**
> **Branch of Policy and Planning**
> **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region**
> **Office (303) 236-4377**
> **Fax (303) 236-4792**

From: Brian Upton
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: Cooperative Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process
Date: Tuesday, August 8, 2017 2:46:58 PM

Thank you Bernardo. I confirmed that Tom McDonald is available on either day you had proposed for the meeting. Thanks!

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 7, 2017, at 2:43 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Dear Mr. Upton,
>
> Attached please find the electronic files of a letter of invitation (also being sent via postal service), the proposed agenda, and the draft memorandum of understanding included with this email message.
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> These documents are being provided to you, as representative of an agency that has expressed interest in participating in the process to develop a comprehensive conservation plan (CCP) and an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the National Bison Range (NBR) in Moiese, Montana. We hope you will review the proposed Cooperative Agencies Meeting agenda and the draft Memorandum of Understanding and provide us with any comments you might have prior to the said meeting.
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> We look forward to working with you and any other representatives of your agency in the development of the CCP and EIS for NBR.
>
> Thank you.
>
> --
> **Bernardo Garza**
> **Planning Team Leader**
> **Branch of Policy and Planning**
> **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region**
> **Office (303) 236-4377**
> **Fax (303) 236-4792**

<Draft Coop Agencies MOU for NBR CCP and EIS.pdf>

<CSKT Invite Coop Ag Mtg.pdf>

<NBR_CCP_EIS_Coop_Agencies_Mtg_Aug_2017.pdf>

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Brian Upton
Subject: Re: Cooperative Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process
Date: Tuesday, August 8, 2017 2:53:26 PM

Thank you Brian

On Tue, Aug 8, 2017 at 2:46 PM, Brian Upton <Brian.Upton@cskt.org> wrote:

> Thank you Bernardo. I confirmed that Tom McDonald is available on either day you had proposed for the meeting. Thanks!
>
> Sent from my iPhone
>
> On Aug 7, 2017, at 2:43 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> > Dear Mr. Upton,
> >
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> > We look forward to working with you and any other representatives of your agency in the development of the CCP and EIS for NBR.
> >
> > Thank you.
> >
> > --
> > **Bernardo Garza**
> > **Planning Team Leader**
> > **Branch of Policy and Planning**

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

<Draft Coop Agencies MOU for NBR CCP and EIS.pdf>

<CSKT Invite Coop Ag Mtg.pdf>

<NBR_CCP_EIS_Coop_Agencies_Mtg_Aug_2017.pdf>

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From:	Jennifer Ekberg
To:	bernardo_garza@fws.gov
Subject:	Meeting Time: Cooperating Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process
Date:	Wednesday, August 9, 2017 11:21:33 AM
Importance:	High

Good Morning Bernard,
I have received your phone message. I will be in meetings during the time that you come back from a conference call today. I thought it might be easier for you to respond to my email.
What day, time and location were the other four agencies proposing?

Thank you,

Jennifer Ekberg
Administrative Assistant
Board of Commissioners
Sanders County, Montana
P.O. Box 519
Thompson Falls, MT 59873
Ph. (406) 827-6966
Fax (406) 827-4388

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From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Jennifer Ekberg
Subject: Re: Meeting Time: Cooperating Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process
Date: Wednesday, August 9, 2017 11:27:33 AM

Thank you Jennifer.

The representatives of the other four agencies (a total of about 14 persons) have notified me that August 29 is the date when all of them can participate in the meeting (which will take place at the Ninepipes Lodge in Charlo).

Moving the date to the 30th is not possible as we already have two other meetings that day: one that will last most of the day (probably 8:30 to 3:30) and then a public meeting in Missoula in the evening (probably 6:00 to 8:30 pm).

Since Labor Day is observed on Monday, Sept. 4, we believe that most agency representatives don't want to be traveling on Friday, Sept. 1.

Is there any way for Sanders County representatives to join us on the 29th?

Bernardo

On Wed, Aug 9, 2017 at 11:21 AM, Jennifer Ekberg <jekberg@co.sanders.mt.us> wrote:

> Good Morning Bernard,
>
> I have received your phone message. I will be in meetings during the time that you come back from a conference call today. I thought it might be easier for you to respond to my email.
>
> What day, time and location were the other four agencies proposing?
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> Thank you,
>
> **Jennifer Ekberg**
>
> **Administrative Assistant**
>
> **Board of Commissioners**
>
> **Sanders County, Montana**
>
> **P.O. Box 519**
>
> **Thompson Falls, MT 59873**
>
> **Ph. (406) 827-6966**

Fax (406) 827-4388



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--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From:	Jennifer Ekberg
To:	Garza, Bernardo
Subject:	RE: Meeting Time: Cooperating Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process
Date:	Wednesday, August 9, 2017 11:40:30 AM

I might be able to get at least one representative to attend that day. What time would the meeting be at?

Jennifer Ekberg
Administrative Assistant
Board of Commissioners
Sanders County, Montana
P.O. Box 519
Thompson Falls, MT 59873
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From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, August 09, 2017 11:28 AM
To: Jennifer Ekberg <jekberg@co.sanders.mt.us>
Subject: Re: Meeting Time: Cooperating Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process

Thank you Jennifer.

The representatives of the other four agencies (a total of about 14 persons) have notified me that August 29 is the date when all of them can participate in the meeting (which will take place at the Ninepipes Lodge in Charlo).

Moving the date to the 30th is not possible as we already have two other meetings that day: one that will last most of the day (probably 8:30 to 3:30) and then a public meeting in Missoula in the evening (probably 6:00 to 8:30 pm).

Since Labor Day is observed on Monday, Sept. 4, we believe that most agency representatives don't want to be traveling on Friday, Sept. 1.

Is there any way for Sanders County representatives to join us on the 29th?

Bernardo

On Wed, Aug 9, 2017 at 11:21 AM, Jennifer Ekberg <jekberg@co.sanders.mt.us> wrote:

> Good Morning Bernard,
> I have received your phone message. I will be in meetings during the time that you come back from a conference call today. I thought it might be easier for you to respond to my email.
> What day, time and location were the other four agencies proposing?
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> Thank you,
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Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Jennifer Ekberg
Subject: Re: Meeting Time: Cooperating Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process
Date: Wednesday, August 9, 2017 1:52:13 PM

Jennifer,

The meeting is scheduled to start at 9 am and end around 2:30 pm, followed by a tour of the National Bison Range or another national wildlife refuge in the area for those interested in participating.

Thank you for considering the schedule

On Wed, Aug 9, 2017 at 11:39 AM, Jennifer Ekberg <jekberg@co.sanders.mt.us> wrote:

> I might be able to get at least one representative to attend that day. What time would the meeting be at?
>
> **Jennifer Ekberg**
>
> **Administrative Assistant**
>
> **Board of Commissioners**
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From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, August 09, 2017 11:28 AM
To: Jennifer Ekberg <jekberg@co.sanders.mt.us>
Subject: Re: Meeting Time: Cooperating Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process

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Is there any way for Sanders County representatives to join us on the 29th?

Bernardo

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>
> What day, time and location were the other four agencies proposing?

Thank you,

Jennifer Ekberg

Administrative Assistant

Board of Commissioners

Sanders County, Montana

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--
Bernardo Garza
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From:	Jennifer Ekberg
To:	Garza, Bernardo
Subject:	RE: Meeting Time: Cooperating Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process
Date:	Wednesday, August 9, 2017 4:55:16 PM

Bernard,
I do have the meeting on the Calendar for at least one Commissioner to attend. However, at this time their schedule is extremely busy with the County budget and I will not be able to confirm till closer to the meeting date of August 29th, 2017.

Thank you,

Jennifer Ekberg
Administrative Assistant
Board of Commissioners
Sanders County, Montana
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From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, August 09, 2017 1:52 PM
To: Jennifer Ekberg <jekberg@co.sanders.mt.us>
Subject: Re: Meeting Time: Cooperating Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process

Jennifer,

The meeting is scheduled to start at 9 am and end around 2:30 pm, followed by a tour of the National Bison Range or another national wildlife refuge in the area for those interested in participating.

Thank you for considering the schedule

On Wed, Aug 9, 2017 at 11:39 AM, Jennifer Ekberg <jekberg@co.sanders.mt.us> wrote:

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From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, August 09, 2017 11:28 AM
To: Jennifer Ekberg <jekberg@co.sanders.mt.us>
Subject: Re: Meeting Time: Cooperating Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process

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--

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From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Jennifer Ekberg
Subject:	Re: Meeting Time: Cooperating Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process
Date:	Thursday, August 10, 2017 8:41:19 AM

Jennifer,

Thank you for all your help in scheduling the meeting. I understand how busy things are and I do hope Sanders County will be able to join us on August 29.

Have a great day.

Bernardo Garza

On Wed, Aug 9, 2017 at 4:54 PM, Jennifer Ekberg <jekberg@co.sanders.mt.us> wrote:

> Bernard,
>
> I do have the meeting on the Calendar for at least one Commissioner to attend. However, at this time their schedule is extremely busy with the County budget and I will not be able to confirm till closer to the meeting date of August 29th, 2017.
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> Thank you,
>
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From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
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Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Brian Upton
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: RE: Cooperative Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process
Date: Monday, August 14, 2017 10:23:23 AM

Thanks for sending on the materials Bernardo. I was out last week, but will review them and let you know if we have any questions or comments.

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Monday, August 07, 2017 2:43 PM
To: Brian Upton
Subject: Cooperative Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process

Dear Mr. Upton,

Attached please find the electronic files of a letter of invitation (also being sent via postal service), the proposed agenda, and the draft memorandum of understanding included with this email message.

These documents are being provided to you, as representative of an agency that has expressed interest in participating in the process to develop a comprehensive conservation plan (CCP) and an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the National Bison Range (NBR) in Moiese, Montana. We hope you will review the proposed Cooperative Agencies Meeting agenda and the draft Memorandum of Understanding and provide us with any comments you might have prior to the said meeting.

As soon as we have found the best date and place for the meeting, based on the input from all the cooperative agencies, we will communicate that information to you.

We look forward to working with you and any other representatives of your agency in the development of the CCP and EIS for NBR.

Thank you.

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
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Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Brian Upton
Subject: Re: Cooperative Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process
Date: Monday, August 14, 2017 10:35:02 AM

Thank you Brian

On Mon, Aug 14, 2017 at 10:22 AM, Brian Upton <Brian.Upton@cskt.org> wrote:

> Thanks for sending on the materials Bernardo. I was out last week, but will review them and let you know if we have any questions or comments.
>
> **From:** Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
> **Sent:** Monday, August 07, 2017 2:43 PM
> **To:** Brian Upton
> **Subject:** Cooperative Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process
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Bernardo Garza

Planning Team Leader

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Bernardo Garza
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From: Redhorse, David
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: Cooperative Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process
Date: Monday, August 14, 2017 11:53:49 AM

Bernardo,
I prefer meeting on Thursday August 31.

On Mon, Aug 7, 2017 at 1:44 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Dear Mr. Redhorse,
>
> Attached please find the electronic files of a letter of invitation (also being sent via postal service), the proposed agenda, and the draft memorandum of understanding included with this email message.
>
> These documents are being provided to you, as representative of an agency that has expressed interest in participating in the process to develop a comprehensive conservation plan (CCP) and an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the National Bison Range (NBR) in Moiese, Montana. We hope you will review the proposed Cooperative Agencies Meeting agenda and the draft Memorandum of Understanding and provide us with any comments you might have prior to the said meeting.
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>
> Thank you.
>
> --
> **Bernardo Garza**
> **Planning Team Leader**
> **Branch of Policy and Planning**
> **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region**
> **Office (303) 236-4377**
> **Fax (303) 236-4792**

From: Hogan, Kelly
To: Kjellsen, Jill
Cc: Bernardo Garza; Diane Emmons
Subject: Re: August NBR CCP meeting schedule
Date: Monday, August 14, 2017 1:25:51 PM

I would say yes...but I will them be the final word. Not sure if both plan on staying the entire week.

On Mon, Aug 14, 2017 at 1:24 PM, Kjellsen, Jill <jill_kjellsen@fws.gov> wrote:

> Should I make airline reservations for Bernardo, Bernie and Dee?
>
> ~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~
> **Jill Kjellsen**
> **R6 PCS Coordinator/Travel Specialist**
> **Lake Andes NWR**
> **38672 291st Street**
> **Lake Andes, SD 57356**
> **(605) 487-7603**
> **FAX: (605) 487-7604**
> ~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~
>
> On Mon, Aug 14, 2017 at 2:19 PM, Hogan, Kelly <kelly_hogan@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> > Please. That worked well.
> > K
> >
> > On Mon, Aug 14, 2017 at 1:14 PM, Kjellsen, Jill <jill_kjellsen@fws.gov> wrote:
> >
> > > Same flight times at last trip?
> > >
> > > ~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~
> > > **Jill Kjellsen**
> > > **R6 PCS Coordinator/Travel Specialist**
> > > **Lake Andes NWR**
> > > **38672 291st Street**
> > > **Lake Andes, SD 57356**
> > > **(605) 487-7603**
> > > **FAX: (605) 487-7604**
> > > ~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~
> > >
> > > On Mon, Aug 14, 2017 at 2:12 PM, Hogan, Kelly <kelly_hogan@fws.gov> wrote:
> > >
> > > > K...guess I will do it the old way and pick up the phone. It will make me feel nostalgic for the old days.
> > > >
> > > > On Mon, Aug 14, 2017 at 1:09 PM, Kjellsen, Jill <jill_kjellsen@fws.gov> wrote:
> > > >
> > > > > I couldn't make those reservations in Concur.
> > > > >
> > > > > ~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~
> > > > > Jill Kjellsen
> > > > > R6 PCS Coordinator/Travel Specialist

Lake Andes NWR
38672 291st Street
Lake Andes, SD 57356
(605) 487-7603
FAX: (605) 487-7604
~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

On Mon, Aug 14, 2017 at 1:55 PM, Hogan, Kelly <kelly_hogan@fws.gov> wrote:

> Afternoon Jill
>
> More travel the end of the month. Going to Missoula MT to work on the NBR CCP. I can't remember if you can make reservations at Ninepipes for us but I not I will call.
>
> Minivan to transport 5 people also needed.
>
> Thanks,
> Kelly
> ---------- Forwarded message ----------
> From: **McCollister, Matthew** <matthew_mccollister@fws.gov>
> Date: Mon, Aug 14, 2017 at 12:43 PM
> Subject: August NBR CCP meeting schedule
> To: Bernie Petersen <bernie_petersen@fws.gov>, Kelly Hogan <kelly_hogan@fws.gov>, Diane Emmons <diane_emmons@fws.gov>, Bernardo Garza <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>, Mary Danno <mary_danno@fws.gov>
>
> Below is the tentative NBR CCP schedule for the last week in August:
>
> 8/28 RO staff travel to Charlo, MT
> 8/29 meet with NBR staff and cooperating agencies, Ninepipe lodge 8 am-4 pm.
> 8/30 public scoping meeting, 5 pm setup, 6-8 pm meeting in the Missoula Public Library
> 8/31 meet with NBR staff and partners about the rest of the complex (Lost Trail)
> 9/1 RO staff return travel
>
> I have blocked 5 rooms for 8/28-9/1 at:
>
> Ninepipe Lodge
> 69286 US-93
> Charlo, MT 59824
> (406) 644-2588
>
> Please give them a call and let them know what your actual dates will be. thanks
> --
> Matthew McCollister
> Wildlife Biologist
> Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge
> Lewistown, MT
~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Redhorse, David
Subject: Re: Cooperative Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process
Date: Monday, August 14, 2017 2:15:34 PM

Hello David,

Your email reached me as I've been preparing to send out the information on date and time for the Bison Range CCP Coop Agencies meeting.

After Matt McCollister (of this office) contacted you to inquire your availability for the Coop Agency meeting at the end of August, I contacted the Salish & Kootenai Tribal rep, as well as the reps from Lake and Sanders counties (MT) and, based on the response to our queries, we set the date for the meeting for Tuesday, Aug. 29. Matt was very sure you had mentioned you could do it on that day and that you could pencil the meeting in your calendar.

I hope you still can join us. It has been quite difficult to obtain replies and dates from everyone interested in participating in this planning process.

Please advise if the 29th would still work for you.

Thanks,

Bernardo

On Mon, Aug 14, 2017 at 11:53 AM, Redhorse, David <david.redhorse@bia.gov> wrote:

> Bernardo,
> I prefer meeting on Thursday August 31.
>
> On Mon, Aug 7, 2017 at 1:44 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:
>
>> Dear Mr. Redhorse,
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>> Attached please find the electronic files of a letter of invitation (also being sent via postal service), the proposed agenda, and the draft memorandum of understanding included with this email message.
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all the cooperative agencies, we will communicate that information to you.

We look forward to working with you and any other representatives of your agency in the development of the CCP and EIS for NBR.

Thank you.

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
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From:	Ryan Moehring
To:	Bernardo Garza
Subject:	RE: Information for Press Release
Date:	Monday, August 14, 2017 2:22:20 PM
Attachments:	National Bison Range_Bulletin_3rd meeting.docx

Bernardo,

Please see the attached draft and feel free to make any proposed edits in track changes. I have sent an email to my bosses for guidance on how best to fast track this announcement. I'll let you know what I learn.

Thanks,
Ryan

Ryan Moehring
Public Affairs
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mountain-Prairie Region
303-236-0345

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Monday, August 14, 2017 2:00 PM
To: Ryan Moehring
Subject: Information for Press Release

Brian,

Here is the information for the press release:

This will be the 3rd Public Scoping Meeting for the development of comprehensive conservation plans for the units of the National Bison Range Complex, which include National Bison Range, Ninepipe NWR, Pablo NWR, Lost Trail NWR, NW Montana Wetland Management District - Lake County, and NW Montana Wetland Management District - Flathead County

The public scoping meeting will take place on Wednesday, August 30, from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm, and there will be a presentation starting at 7:00 pm.

The place of the meeting will be the Large Meeting Room of the main branch of the Missoula Public Library, located at 301 East Main, Missoula, MT 59802, (406) 721-2665

Thank you
--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region

Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

News Bulletin

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mountain-Prairie Region
134 Union Boulevard
Lakewood, Colorado 80228

For Immediate Release
August 16, 2017

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to Host a Third Public Meeting for National Bison Range Planning Efforts

Contact: Ryan Moehring, (303) 236-0345; Ryan_Moehring@fws.gov

DENVER – As part of its ongoing efforts to protect America's national mammal, the American bison, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is inviting the public to attend a third scoping meeting to help shape future management options for the National Bison Range Complex in western Montana.

This invitation follows an announcement made earlier this year in which the Service published a revised notice of intent to prepare comprehensive conservation plans (CCPs) and accompanying environmental analysis for the National Bison Range and the rest of the units that make up the National Bison Range Complex.

That announcement opened a 30-day public comment period, which began on May 18, 2017 and included two public meetings, one in Polson and another in Kalispell. This third meeting was requested by planning partners, in an effort to provide the public with additional opportunities to familiarize themselves with the various management options being considered.

Once finalized, the CCPs will outline the resource management goals and wildlife-dependent visitor recreational opportunities for the National Bison Range and the other units that make up the Complex over the next 15 years.

Information about the meeting is as follows:

Date: Wednesday, August 30, 2017
Time: 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Location: Missoula Public Library, large meeting room
Address: 301 East Main, Missoula, MT 59802
Venue Phone: 406-721-2665

The meeting will follow an informal open-house format. Brief presentations will be given at 6:00 p.m., but attendees are invited to arrive anytime between 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. to meet with

Service personnel, learn more about the CCP process, and provide input.

To learn more about the National Bison Range visit:
https://www.fws.gov/refuge/national_bison_range/.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service.

For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie, and connect us at www.facebook.com/USFWSMountainPrairie, http://twitter.com/USFWSMtnPrairie, www.youtube.com/usfws and www.flickr.com/photos/usfwsmtnprairie.

–FWS–

From: Redhorse, David
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: Cooperative Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process
Date: Monday, August 14, 2017 2:26:44 PM

Indeed I stated the 29th works - but after seeing options among the three days, Thursday would have been preferred. I can still plan to join on the 29th.

On Mon, Aug 14, 2017 at 1:15 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Hello David,
>
> Your email reached me as I've been preparing to send out the information on date and time for the Bison Range CCP Coop Agencies meeting.
>
> After Matt McCollister (of this office) contacted you to inquire your availability for the Coop Agency meeting at the end of August, I contacted the Salish & Kootenai Tribal rep, as well as the reps from Lake and Sanders counties (MT) and, based on the response to our queries, we set the date for the meeting for Tuesday, Aug. 29. Matt was very sure you had mentioned you could do it on that day and that you could pencil the meeting in your calendar.
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> I hope you still can join us. It has been quite difficult to obtain replies and dates from everyone interested in participating in this planning process.
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> Please advise if the 29th would still work for you.
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> Thanks,
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> Bernardo
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> On Mon, Aug 14, 2017 at 11:53 AM, Redhorse, David <david.redhorse@bia.gov> wrote:
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Thank you.

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Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
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Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
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From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Ryan Moehring
Subject: Re: Information for Press Release
Date: Monday, August 14, 2017 2:31:13 PM

Ryan,

Thank you very much for putting the press release together.

The only information I would like to change a bit is the following paragraph:

The meeting will follow an informal open-house format. Brief presentations will be given at 6:00
p.m., but attendees are invited to arrive anytime between 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. to meet with Service personnel, learn more about the CCP process, and provide input.

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p.m., but attendees are invited to arrive anytime after 6:00 p.m. to meet with
Service personnel, learn more about the CCP process, and provide input.

Thank you Ryan

On Mon, Aug 14, 2017 at 2:22 PM, Ryan Moehring <ryan_moehring@fws.gov> wrote:

> Bernardo,
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> Please see the attached draft and feel free to make any proposed edits in track changes. I have sent an email to my bosses for guidance on how best to fast track this announcement. I'll let you know what I learn.
>
> Thanks,
>
> Ryan
>
> Ryan Moehring
>
> Public Affairs
>
> U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
>
> Mountain-Prairie Region

303-236-0345

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Monday, August 14, 2017 2:00 PM
To: Ryan Moehring
Subject: Information for Press Release

Brian,

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Thank you

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Bernardo Garza

Planning Team Leader

Branch of Policy and Planning

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region

Office (303) 236-4377

Fax (303) 236-4792

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Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
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Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Redhorse, David
Subject: Re: Cooperative Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process
Date: Monday, August 14, 2017 2:32:08 PM

Fantastic!

Thank you David.

I'll be sending the email with the meeting information yet this afternoon.

Good to have you in the planning team!

On Mon, Aug 14, 2017 at 2:26 PM, Redhorse, David <david.redhorse@bia.gov> wrote:

> Indeed I stated the 29th works - but after seeing options among the three days, Thursday would have been preferred. I can still plan to join on the 29th.
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Thank you.

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Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Ryan Moehring
To: Bernardo Garza
Subject: RE: Information for Press Release
Date: Monday, August 14, 2017 2:33:52 PM

Thanks, Bernardo! I'll try to get this approved ASAP. More soon.

Thanks,
Ryan

Ryan Moehring
Public Affairs
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mountain-Prairie Region
303-236-0345

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Monday, August 14, 2017 2:31 PM
To: Ryan Moehring
Subject: Re: Information for Press Release

Ryan,

Thank you very much for putting the press release together.

The only information I would like to change a bit is the following paragraph:

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p.m., but attendees are invited to arrive anytime between 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. to meet with Service personnel, learn more about the CCP process, and provide input.

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Thanks,
Ryan

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Public Affairs
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mountain-Prairie Region
303-236-0345

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To: Ryan Moehring
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Thank you
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Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
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--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Ryan Moehring
Subject: Re: Information for Press Release
Date: Monday, August 14, 2017 2:34:48 PM

No. Thank you Ryan!

On Mon, Aug 14, 2017 at 2:33 PM, Ryan Moehring <ryan_moehring@fws.gov> wrote:

> Thanks, Bernardo! I'll try to get this approved ASAP. More soon.
>
> Thanks,
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> Ryan
>
> Ryan Moehring
>
> Public Affairs
>
> U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
>
> Mountain-Prairie Region
>
> 303-236-0345
>
> **From:** Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
> **Sent:** Monday, August 14, 2017 2:31 PM
> **To:** Ryan Moehring
> **Subject:** Re: Information for Press Release
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Ryan

Ryan Moehring

Public Affairs

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Mountain-Prairie Region

303-236-0345

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Thank you

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Bernardo Garza

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Branch of Policy and Planning

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Bernardo Garza

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From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Gale Decker; Jennifer Ekberg; David Redhorse; Brian Upton
Bcc:	Diane Emmons; Mary; McCollister, Matthew; Kelly Hogan; Jeff King; Kevin Shinn; Bernie Petersen; Laura King; Helen
Subject:	National Bison Range CCP Cooperative Agencies Meeting Information
Date:	Monday, August 14, 2017 3:44:24 PM
Attachments:	NBR_CCP_EIS_Coop_Agencies_Mtg_Aug_2017.doc

Dear Cooperative Agencies Representatives,

Once again I want to thank all of you for your interest in being a Cooperative Agency in the development of a comprehensive conservation plan and environmental impact statement for the National Bison Range. I look forward to working with each one of you in this important planning document which will guide the management of this jewel of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Based on the input I received from all of you, it has been decided that the Cooperating Agencies Meeting will take place on Tuesday, August 29, 2017. The meeting will be held at the meeting room in the Ninepipes Lodge in Charlo, Montana (http://www.ninepipeslodge.com/, 406-644-2588, 69286 Highway 93, Charlo, MT 59824).

According the schedule I shared with all of you (and is attached to this message), we want to begin the meeting at 9:00 am to allow sufficient time to travel to this site on the day of the meeting. If, after adjourning the meeting, you would like to tour of one of the units of the National Bison Range Complex near the meeting site, please let me know so I can make the necessary arrangements.

Ninepipes Lodge serves excellent food and a variety of drinks if you would like to eat lunch at the Allentown Restaurant or the Allentown Bar collocated with the meeting site. Otherwise Ronan, Polson, and Saint Ignatius also offer eating opportunities within driving distance.

Also, let me take this opportunity to announce to you that we will be holding a third public scoping meeting for the comprehensive conservation plans of the units of the National Bison Range Complex. The scoping meeting will take place from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm on Wednesday, August 30. There will be a brief presentation starting at 7:00 pm., followed by a time to answer questions from meeting participants. The meeting venue will be the Large Meeting Room of the main branch of the Missoula Public Library, located at 301 East Main, Missoula, MT 59802, (406) 721-2665.

Our External Affairs office will send out a Public Release momentarily to inform local media outlets of the public scoping meeting, but we hope you can help us spread the news of this meeting among the members of your communities.

Please let me know if you have any questions or comments about either of these meetings.

Take care,

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Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
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NBR CCP/EIS Cooperating Agencies Meeting

August 2017

AGENDA

9:00 am Introductions and meeting logistics; conversation on possible refuges tours

9:30 am Introduction to, discussion on, and implications of the CCP development process

- Presentation on the CCP development process:
  - Why does the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service develops CCPs
  - Steps of the CCP and EIS development process
  - "Side bars" of the planning process
  - CCP development schedule
  - Detailed discussion on the Planning Team
  - Discussion on Next Steps

10:30 am Short Break

10:45 am Presentation

- History of the refuge(s)
- Background information
- Habitats
- Current management

11:15 am Brainstorming on NBR Issues and Opportunities; Time for Q & A

12:30 pm Lunch break

1:30 pm Review and signature of Memorandum of Understanding

2:30 pm Tour of the Refuge(s)

4:30 pm End of tours and adjournment of meeting

From: Danno, Mary
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: National Bison Range CCP Cooperative Agencies Meeting Information
Date: Monday, August 14, 2017 3:47:33 PM

---

thanks much, Bernardo.....

Also, I received the info from Matt, regarding our meeting, lodging, etc.

See you soon! :)

Mary Danno

Visitor Services Manager
Visitor Services and Outreach
Region 6, National Wildlife Refuge System
303-236-4451 - new phone #

(Lieu: Fridays)

EVS Website: https://inside.fws.gov/index.cfm/go/post/Division-of-Education-and-Visitor-Services-Home

On Mon, Aug 14, 2017 at 2:44 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

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Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From:	Brian Upton
To:	Garza, Bernardo
Subject:	RE: National Bison Range CCP Cooperative Agencies Meeting Information
Date:	Monday, August 14, 2017 3:55:43 PM

Thank you Bernardo.

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Monday, August 14, 2017 3:44 PM
To: Gale Decker; Jennifer Ekberg; David Redhorse; Brian Upton
Subject: National Bison Range CCP Cooperative Agencies Meeting Information

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Take care,

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Brian Upton
Subject: Re: National Bison Range CCP Cooperative Agencies Meeting Information
Date: Monday, August 14, 2017 3:56:25 PM

You are welcome

On Mon, Aug 14, 2017 at 3:55 PM, Brian Upton <Brian.Upton@cskt.org> wrote:

> Thank you Bernardo.
>
> **From:** Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
> **Sent:** Monday, August 14, 2017 3:44 PM
> **To:** Gale Decker; Jennifer Ekberg; David Redhorse; Brian Upton
> **Subject:** National Bison Range CCP Cooperative Agencies Meeting Information
>
> Dear Cooperative Agencies Representatives,
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From: Edwards, Helen
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: National Bison Range CCP Cooperative Agencies Meeting Information
Date: Monday, August 14, 2017 4:44:31 PM

Thank you Bernardo for including me. I appreciate you thinking of me!!!! I probably won't get to attend but at least I'm in the loop. Have a great day!!!!!

Helen Edwards
Budget Technician
303-236-4390
303-236-4792(FAX)
134 Union Blvd Suite 300
Lakewood, CO 80228

On Mon, Aug 14, 2017 at 3:44 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

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From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Edwards, Helen
Subject: Re: National Bison Range CCP Cooperative Agencies Meeting Information
Date: Tuesday, August 15, 2017 8:00:47 AM

You are welcome and you too have a wonderful day up there, in the gorgeous Mission Valley

On Mon, Aug 14, 2017 at 4:44 PM, Edwards, Helen <helen_edwards@fws.gov> wrote:

> Thank you Bernardo for including me. I appreciate you thinking of me!!!! I probably won't get to attend but at least I'm in the loop. Have a great day!!!!!
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> Helen Edwards
> Budget Technician
> 303-236-4390
> 303-236-4792(FAX)
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> Lakewood, CO 80228
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From: McCollister, Matthew
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: National Bison Range CCP Cooperative Agencies Meeting Information
Date: Tuesday, August 15, 2017 8:25:58 AM

When you get a press release, can you send it to me? I'll send it out to a few folks that might help circulate it.

On Mon, Aug 14, 2017 at 3:44 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

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--
Matthew McCollister
Wildlife Biologist
Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge
Lewistown, MT

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: McCollister, Matthew
Subject: Re: National Bison Range CCP Cooperative Agencies Meeting Information
Date: Tuesday, August 15, 2017 8:26:30 AM

Absolutely.

On Tue, Aug 15, 2017 at 8:25 AM, McCollister, Matthew <matthew_mccollister@fws.gov> wrote:

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From:	Hogan, Kelly
To:	Bernardo Garza
Subject:	Fwd: National Bison Range CCP Cooperative Agencies Meeting Information
Date:	Tuesday, August 15, 2017 10:27:58 AM
Attachments:	NBR_CCP_EIS_Coop_Agencies_Mtg_Aug_2017.doc

Bernardo

Please work up a paragraph for the WO report regarding plans for the week of the CA meeting. Also include the website address in the summary.

Thanks,
Kelly
---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Garza, Bernardo** <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>
Date: Mon, Aug 14, 2017 at 3:44 PM
Subject: National Bison Range CCP Cooperative Agencies Meeting Information
To: Gale Decker <gdecker@lakemt.gov>, Jennifer Ekberg <jekberg@co.sanders.mt.us>, David Redhorse <david.redhorse@bia.gov>, Brian Upton <brian.upton@cskt.org>

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NBR CCP/EIS Cooperating Agencies Meeting

August 2017

AGENDA

9:00 am Introductions and meeting logistics; conversation on possible refuges tours

9:30 am Introduction to, discussion on, and implications of the CCP development process

- Presentation on the CCP development process:
  - Why does the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service develops CCPs
  - Steps of the CCP and EIS development process
  - "Side bars" of the planning process
  - CCP development schedule
  - Detailed discussion on the Planning Team
  - Discussion on Next Steps

10:30 am Short Break

10:45 am Presentation

- History of the refuge(s)
- Background information
- Habitats
- Current management

11:15 am Brainstorming on NBR Issues and Opportunities; Time for Q & A

12:30 pm Lunch break

1:30 pm Review and signature of Memorandum of Understanding

2:30 pm Tour of the Refuge(s)

4:30 pm End of tours and adjournment of meeting

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Hogan, Kelly
Subject: Re: National Bison Range CCP Cooperative Agencies Meeting Information
Date: Tuesday, August 15, 2017 10:29:35 AM

Sure. How long of a paragraph? Also, are you speaking of the website for the NBR CCP/EIS?

On Tue, Aug 15, 2017 at 10:27 AM, Hogan, Kelly <kelly_hogan@fws.gov> wrote:

> Bernardo
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From: Hogan, Kelly
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: National Bison Range CCP Cooperative Agencies Meeting Information
Date: Tuesday, August 15, 2017 10:30:38 AM

---

4 or 5 sentences. Yes. Thanks,

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From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Hogan, Kelly
Subject: Re: National Bison Range CCP Cooperative Agencies Meeting Information
Date: Tuesday, August 15, 2017 10:31:59 AM

Will do.

On Tue, Aug 15, 2017 at 10:30 AM, Hogan, Kelly <kelly_hogan@fws.gov> wrote:

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> > > Based on the input I received from all of you, it has been decided that the Cooperating Agencies Meeting will take place on Tuesday, August 29, 2017. The meeting will be held at the meeting room in the Ninepipes Lodge in Charlo, Montana (http://www.ninepipeslodge.com/, 406-644-2588, 69286 Highway 93, Charlo, MT 59824).

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Our External Affairs office will send out a Public Release momentarily to inform local media outlets of the public scoping meeting, but we hope you can help us spread the news of this meeting among the members of your communities.

Please let me know if you have any questions or comments about either of these meetings.

Take care,

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

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From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Hogan, Kelly
Subject: Re: National Bison Range CCP Cooperative Agencies Meeting Information
Date: Tuesday, August 15, 2017 11:32:09 AM

Here's the draft:

National Bison Range comprehensive conservation plan

The Service will host a meeting and tour of the National Bison Range for tribal, federal, and local agencies interested in being cooperating agencies in the development of the comprehensive conservation plan for this refuge. The meeting will involve representatives of the Salish & Kootenai Tribes, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Lake County, Sanders County, as well as refuge and Region 6 Regional Office personnel. During the August 29 meeting, the Service will present the CCP development schedule, address issues raised by meeting attendees, and finally discuss and sign a memorandum of understanding with the cooperating agencies. After the meeting, the refuge staff will lead a tour of the refuge, and, on the following evening, will host a third public scoping meeting in Missoula. More information on the National Bison Range planning effort may be found in the refuge planning website (https://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/refuges/nbrc.php)

On Tue, Aug 15, 2017 at 10:30 AM, Hogan, Kelly <kelly_hogan@fws.gov> wrote:

> 4 or 5 sentences. Yes. Thanks,
>
> On Tue, Aug 15, 2017 at 10:29 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> > Sure. How long of a paragraph? Also, are you speaking of the website for the NBR CCP/EIS?
> >
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> >
> > > Bernardo
> > >
> > > Please work up a paragraph for the WO report regarding plans for the week of the CA meeting. Also include the website address in the summary.
> > >
> > > Thanks,
> > > Kelly
> > > ---------- Forwarded message ----------
> > > From: **Garza, Bernardo** <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>
> > > Date: Mon, Aug 14, 2017 at 3:44 PM
> > > Subject: National Bison Range CCP Cooperative Agencies Meeting Information
> > > To: Gale Decker <gdecker@lakemt.gov>, Jennifer Ekberg <jekberg@co.sanders.mt.us>, David Redhorse <david.redhorse@bia.gov>, Brian Upton <brian.upton@cskt.org>
> > >
> > > Dear Cooperative Agencies Representatives,

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> **Bernardo Garza**
> **Planning Team Leader**
> **Branch of Policy and Planning**
> **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region**
> **Office (303) 236-4377**
> **Fax (303) 236-4792**

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From: Hogan, Kelly
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: National Bison Range CCP Cooperative Agencies Meeting Information
Date: Tuesday, August 15, 2017 11:57:03 AM

Thanks...made a few changes and sent to Bernie.

On Tue, Aug 15, 2017 at 11:32 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Here's the draft:
>
> **National Bison Range comprehensive conservation plan**
>
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> > > > To: Gale Decker <gdecker@lakemt.gov>, Jennifer Ekberg <jekberg@co.sanders.mt.us>, David Redhorse <david.redhorse@bia.gov>, Brian Upton <brian.upton@cskt.org>

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From:	Munoz, Anna
To:	Garza, Bernardo
Subject:	Fwd: Heads up
Date:	Tuesday, August 15, 2017 2:21:40 PM
Attachments:	National Bison Range_Bulletin_3rd meeting.docx

Anna Muñoz
Assistant Regional Director - External Affairs
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office: 303-236-4510
Cell: 720-648-2542

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Ryan Moehring** <ryan_moehring@fws.gov>
Date: Mon, Aug 14, 2017 at 2:34 PM
Subject: RE: Heads up
To: Anna Munoz <anna_munoz@fws.gov>, Roya Mogadam <roya_mogadam@fws.gov>

Apologies for the email onslaught. Bernardo just reviewed and only had one minor correction, which is reflected in this updated draft.

Thanks,

Ryan

Ryan Moehring

Public Affairs

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Mountain-Prairie Region

303-236-0345

From: Ryan Moehring [mailto:ryan_moehring@fws.gov]
Sent: Monday, August 14, 2017 2:31 PM
To: Anna Munoz (anna_munoz@fws.gov); Roya Mogadam
Subject: RE: Heads up

Update: I made some time and wrote a quick draft, which is currently with Bernardo for an accuracy review.

Thanks,

Ryan

Ryan Moehring

Public Affairs

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Mountain-Prairie Region

303-236-0345

From: Ryan Moehring [mailto:ryan_moehring@fws.gov]
Sent: Monday, August 14, 2017 1:56 PM
To: Anna Munoz (anna_munoz@fws.gov); Roya Mogadam
Subject: Heads up

Two things:

1) I found out from UT that PETPO is going to file a stay today, which should bump out the mandate at least another week. I have a call in to the SOL to confirm.

2) Bernardo stopped by to inform me that the CSKT, MT FWP, and other cooperators around the NBR CCP planning effort have requested a third public meeting. Planning has already secured a meeting room in Missoula for the 30th of this month. In order to give the public two weeks' notice we would need to issue a NR this Wednesday. I'll be out of pocket most of the day tomorrow for the Ferret Center event and can gin something up very quickly that afternoon or Wednesday morning, but that doesn't give us enough time to surname. Can we get away with a quick review from one of you and maybe Will, or is there another way you would like to approach?

Thanks,

Ryan

Ryan Moehring

Public Affairs

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Mountain-Prairie Region

303-236-0345

Web |Facebook | Twitter | Flickr | YouTube

News Bulletin

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mountain-Prairie Region
134 Union Boulevard
Lakewood, Colorado 80228

For Immediate Release
August 16, 2017

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to Host a Third Public Meeting for National Bison Range Planning Efforts

Contact: Ryan Moehring, (303) 236-0345; Ryan_Moehring@fws.gov

DENVER – As part of its ongoing efforts to protect America's national mammal, the American bison, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is inviting the public to attend a third scoping meeting to help shape future management options for the National Bison Range Complex in western Montana.

This invitation follows an announcement made earlier this year in which the Service published a revised notice of intent to prepare comprehensive conservation plans (CCPs) and accompanying environmental analysis for the National Bison Range and the rest of the units that make up the National Bison Range Complex.

That announcement opened a 30-day public comment period, which began on May 18, 2017 and included two public meetings, one in Polson and another in Kalispell. This third meeting was requested by planning partners, in an effort to provide the public with additional opportunities to familiarize themselves with the various management options being considered.

Once finalized, the CCPs will outline the resource management goals and wildlife-dependent visitor recreational opportunities for the National Bison Range and the other units that make up the Complex over the next 15 years.

Information about the meeting is as follows:

Date: Wednesday, August 30, 2017
Time: 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Location: Missoula Public Library, large meeting room
Address: 301 East Main, Missoula, MT 59802
Venue Phone: 406-721-2665

The meeting will follow an informal open-house format. A brief presentation will be given at 7:00 p.m., but attendees are invited to arrive any time after 6:00 p.m. to meet with Service personnel, learn more about the CCP process, and provide input.

To learn more about the National Bison Range visit: https://www.fws.gov/refuge/national_bison_range/.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service.

For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie, and connect us at www.facebook.com/USFWSMountainPrairie, http://twitter.com/USFWSMtnPrairie, www.youtube.com/usfws and www.flickr.com/photos/usfwsmtnprairie.

–FWS–

THE CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES
OF THE FLATHEAD NATION
P.O. BOX 278
Pablo, Montana 59855
(406) 275-2700
FAX (406) 275-2806
www.cskt.org

A People of Vision

A Confederation of the Salish,
Pend d' Oreille
and Kootenai Tribes

TRIBAL COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Vernon S. Finley - Chairman
Len Twoteeth - Vice Chair
Troy Felsman - Secretary
Anita Matt - Treasurer
Ronald Trahan
Shelly R. Fyant
Leonard W. Gray
Carole Lankford
Dennis Clairmont
Patty Stevens

August 15, 2017

Mr. Kelly Hogan, Acting Planning Chief
Ms. Toni Griffin, Refuge Planner
NBR CCP
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
134 Union Blvd.
Lakewood, CO 80228

Dear Ms. Griffin,

In response to the revised "Notice of Intent to Prepare a Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the National Bison Range, Moiese, Montana" and the "Notice of Intent to Prepare a Comprehensive Conservation Plan; Pablo, Lost Trail, and Ninepipe National Wildlife Refuges, and the Northwest Montana Wetland Management Districts, Montana" which the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service published in the May 18, 2017 Federal Register, enclosed please find scoping comments from the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes in response to both Notices.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (406) 275-2760 or brian.upton@cskt.org.

Thank you,

Brian Upton
Tribal Attorney
CSKT Legal Department

enclosures

CSKT Scoping Comment in Response to the Revised "Notice of Intent to Prepare a Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the National Bison Range, Moiese, Montana"

August 15, 2017

In response to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's (FWS, or Service) May 18, 2017 revised notice of intent to prepare a Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) and accompanying Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the National Bison Range (NBR, or Bison Range), the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT, or Tribes) submit this scoping comment. This comment follows the Tribes' February 16, 2017 scoping comment, submitted in response to the Service's original notice of intent to prepare a CCP/EIS for the NBR, dated January 18, 2017.

The Tribes were pleased that FWS Refuge Planner Toni Griffin stated, during scoping meetings held in Polson and Kalispell, Montana on June 6th and 7th, respectively, that all comments submitted in response to the January 18th notice will remain part of the administrative record for the current revised notice. The Tribes support this, as it is burdensome for the public to have to respond to two different notices of intent for the same CCP/EIS within the span of six months. Since it will remain part of the administrative record, the Tribes are not resubmitting, as part of this comment, our original February 16, 2017 scoping comment with attachments. Ms. Griffin also stated that the Service would accept scoping comments beyond the June 19th date identified in the May 18th revised notice of intent, up until a draft EIS was developed.

As a preliminary matter, the Tribes note that, when the Department announced that the Service would no longer be evaluating as its preferred alternative the legislative restoration of the Bison Range to federal trust ownership for CSKT, it stated that an initial review by FWS showed that a majority of the comments submitted in response to the Service's January 18, 2017 original notice of intent were against the preferred alternative.

In reality, many more people were represented in support of the preferred alternative. FWS received a total of less than 60 scoping comments in response to the January 18th notice. Included in those responses are comments from The Sierra Club, Natural Resources Defense Council, Wildlife Conservation Society, Montana Conservation Voters and Headwaters Montana, which collectively represent over six million people. Those organizations all submitted comments in support of the preferred alternative. The National Wildlife Federation, which has over four million members, has also been on record with its support for congressional legislation restoring the Bison Range to federal trust ownership for the Tribes, as have a number of other organizations (*see NWF comment included as part of the Tribes' comment in response to the January 18th scoping notice*). It is therefore misleading to imply that most of the comments were opposed to the preferred alternative when an exceedingly large majority of people, on the order of millions as represented by the commenters, were actually supportive of it.

It is, however, instructive to look at the actual comments submitted by individuals opposed to the preferred alternative. Of the several dozen comments submitted by individuals opposing the preferred alternative, the following excerpts are representative of many of them:

"I would suggest a better effort would be directed toward extinguishing the boundaries of The [*sic*] Flathead Indian Reservation and terminate the conflicting (and illogical) status of 'sovereign' tribes. . . ."

[*from comment submitted to FWS dated February 16, 2017*]

"All federal and state funding and subsidization of some 20 billion of the 567 tribes and the 400 some in waiting need to be stopped. This sort of tribal welfare is creating a national embarrassment. . . . The objective of the reservations have long run its course [*sic*]"

[*from comment submitted to FWS dated February 18, 2017*]

"[T]he indians [*sic*] ask for more money, free college, rights to lands water, now bison . . . If they want to be autonomous then why do they keep asking for things from the rest of the tax paying public?"

[*from comment submitted to FWS dated February 20, 2017*]

"We've given them enough free things for way to [*sic*] many years."

[*from comment submitted to FWS dated February 28, 2017*]

"Meanwhile, native populations need to better prepare themselves to take on such responsibilities and philosophies in our current world, or even to become self-sufficient citizens. Generations of federal welfare and total provision has been [*sic*] demeaning and a detriment rather than a help for them as a society."

[*from comment submitted to FWS dated February 21, 2017*]

Rather than recognizing the Tribes' record as a natural resources manager, as does FWS and many national, regional and local conservation groups, many of these commenters simply display an ideological opposition to Indians, reservations, tribal governments, and federal Indian law. While everyone is entitled to their opinion, it is equally important that FWS recognize and acknowledge that numerous comments submitted display themes of bigotry or hostility towards tribes. The comments indicate that there appears to have been some coordination amongst some of the commenters, including individuals who have been the subject of past reporting by the Montana Human Rights Network, the Southern Poverty Law Center, and others for what the Montana Human Rights Network, for example, identifies as anti-Indian activity.[1]

---

[1] *E.g.*: Montana Human Rights Network, "Right-Wing Conspiracies and Racism Mar Opposition to Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and State of Montana Water Compact", April 15, 2015 (*see* http://www.mhrn.org/publications/specialresearchreports/Right-Wing%20Conspiracies%20and%20Racism%20Mar%20Opposition%20to%20Confederated%20Salish%20and%20

With respect to the Tribes' input in response to the revised notice of intent, this comment identifies those areas which the Tribes believe should be addressed in the NBR CCP and/or EIS. The Tribes understand that the CCP is a large undertaking, and that the Service may not be able to address all topics in great detail. The Tribes expect that the CCP will generally assist the public in understanding how FWS expects the NBR to operate as part of the newly-designated Western Montana National Wildlife Refuge Complex, as identified and discussed in the Service's Region 6 document titled "National Wildlife Refuge System Realignment Strategy and Staffing Framework", released in November of 2016 (further addressed in subsequent sections of this comment).

The general issues identified below are not listed in any particular order, and are thus not necessarily identified in order of priority.

Management

The Tribes were pleased to see that the original January 18, 2017 notice of intent had indicated that, of the initially-identified management alternatives that the EIS would evaluate, FWS had identified as its preferred alternative congressional legislation to restore the National Bison Range to federal trust ownership for the Tribes, with requirements for continued bison and wildlife conservation. Last summer, after consulting with FWS, the Tribes had publicly released draft legislation to accomplish such a restoration, with requirements for continued bison and wildlife conservation as well as continued public access: the National Bison Range Restoration Act. The Tribes continue to believe that such restoration would be an effective way to: manage the wildlife and other resources; increase effective public education and visitation experiences; and address the Tribes' history with the NBR land and bison. However, we understand that the Service is now focused on maintaining the NBR as a National Wildlife Refuge and is no longer examining a restoration option.

While the Service's notice of intent to prepare a CCP/EIS includes management alternatives that address Tribal participation or cooperation, the Tribes would encourage cooperative efforts with the Tribes to be addressed even under the 'no action' alternative and any other alternatives identified during this scoping period.

At this time, the Tribes do not believe that the CCP, and accompanying EIS, should address, as a specific management alternative, Tribal management or cooperation through an agreement under the Tribal Self-Governance Act or other authority. The Tribes believe that any such analysis would be more appropriate and effective in a separate document that would accompany a future proposal or agreement. However, given the long history of cooperation and coordination between the Tribes and the Service, the Tribes believe it would be appropriate for the CCP/EIS

Kootenai%20Tribes%20and%20State%20of%20Montana%20Water%20Compact.pdf); Montana Human Rights Network, "On the (Bison) Range: Tribes Seek Management Role, Confront Anti-Indian Sentiment", Human Rights Network News, March 2008, at 7 (*see* http://www.mhrn.org/publications/humanrightsnetworknews/0308.pdf); and Ryan Lenz, "Seeing Red", Southern Poverty Law Center Intelligence Report, February 17, 2016 (*see* https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/intelligence-report/2016/seeing-red).

to acknowledge the history, and potential future, of Tribal cooperation at the National Bison Range, as well as generally address collaborative work with the Tribes.

The Tribes encourage the Service to use this opportunity to revisit how it interacts with the Tribes, our Tribal citizens, and the general public with respect to indigenous culture, language, and land uses. This is also an opportunity for the Service to examine the Bison Range within the context of its location on the Flathead Indian Reservation. FWS may elect to do the minimum amount required with respect to these efforts and generally approach this CCP as it would for any other Refuge. Alternatively, FWS may elect to become a leader in how federal agencies in this country approach: 1) partnerships with tribal governments in Indian country; and 2) the federal trust responsibility towards tribes within the context of Refuge management. The Tribes encourage the latter approach.

A model that the Service could examine comes from the agency's Canadian counterpart. The Canadian Wildlife Service utilizes "Impact and Benefit Agreements" with respect to its management of National Wildlife Areas and Migratory Bird Sanctuaries within the indigenous Territory of Nunavut (*copy included with this comment as Attachment #1*). While this is against the backdrop of a different legal landscape, the salient point is how the federal government of Canada has proactively chosen to engage, collaborate and interact with its aboriginal partners in Nunavut. As part of its management of National Wildlife Areas and Migratory Bird Sanctuaries in Nunavut, the CWS addresses the following issues, among many others:

- use of native language in CWS interpretive and other materials and activities, including place names;
- use of "traditional, current and evolving body of Inuit values, beliefs, experience, perceptions and knowledge regarding the environment";
- incorporation into management plans of cultural history and the context within which the wildlife areas or bird sanctuaries operate;
- development and use of oral histories
- use of aboriginal guides;
- explicit consultation procedures to ensure substantive, rather than superficial, consultation;
- explicit evaluation and tracking activities to measure progress on achieving these objectives; and
- criteria for hiring CWS staff working within Nunavut, including knowledge of: Inuit culture, society and economy; native language; and knowledge of laws relevant to the Inuit/Nunavut legal landscape.

These Impact and Benefit Agreements provide for the incorporation of native languages and staff training into the protected areas' management, as well as the incorporation of traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) into Western science. As stated on FWS' website, "[a]n increasing number of scientists and Native people believe that Western Science and TEK are complementary."[2] The CCP/EIS should address this with respect to the Bison Range.

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2 *See* https://www.fws.gov/nativeamerican/pdf/tek-fact-sheet.pdf

Ninepipe, Pablo, & Lost Trail National Wildlife Refuges; Northwest Montana Wetlands Management District

Since our prior scoping comment, the Service published, on May 18, 2017, a notice of intent to prepare a CCP and accompanying environmental assessment for the remainder of the National Bison Range Complex (NBRC), including the Ninepipe, Pablo and Lost Trail National Wildlife Refuges, as well as the Northwest Montana Wetland Management Districts. In response to that notice, CSKT is submitting separate scoping comments. To the extent that they are part of the existing NBRC, CSKT incorporates by reference into this comment the "CSKT Scoping Comment in Response to the 'Notice of Intent to Prepare a Comprehensive Conservation Plan; Pablo, Lost Trail, and Ninepipe National Wildlife Refuges, and the Northwest Montana Wetlands Management District, Montana", also dated August 15, 2017 and submitted to the Service.

Wildlife and Fisheries Management

The Tribes expect that bison and big game species management would be prominently addressed in the CCP. This management, including for bighorn sheep, elk and deer, would include such issues as: herd size targets/culling plans; general health monitoring and management; genetics; as well as other general management issues.

The Tribes also expect that predator management (including, among other species, black bear, grizzly bear, gray wolf, coyote, mountain lion, golden eagle, and bald eagle) would be addressed by the CCP.

The Tribes recommend that the CCP address surveying and monitoring of nongame birds, as well as amphibians and reptiles.

The Tribes further recommend that the CCP acknowledge the Tribes' role in fisheries management at the National Bison Range.

Habitat Management

Range condition, weed management, pine encroachment, forest habitat management, fire management, riparian management, wetland management, and water management issues are all components of habitat management that should be addressed in the CCP.

Aquatic Invasive Species

The Tribes believe that the CCP should address contingencies for aquatic invasive species, whose profile has recently been elevated in Montana.

Public Use and Access

The CCP provides an opportunity to examine, and plan for, such public use/access considerations as: visitation projections; desired visitor experiences; fishing access; wildlife watching and photography opportunities; recreation site (picnic areas) availability and management; fee structures; and the possibility of tours.

With respect to access by citizens of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, the Tribes believe that the existing Memorandum of Agreement between FWS and CSKT governing access to the National Bison Range (as well as the Ninepipe and Pablo Refuges) has worked well.

Visitor Services

The Tribes anticipate that the CCP would address the following issues related to visitor services:

- current state of, and future outlook for, the visitor center, including need and potential for replacement;
- access considerations, including potential for an additional, or alternate, entrance such as at Ravalli Hill (a suggestion made by public commenters on several occasions);
- interpretive displays, materials and sale items;
- information availability and standards/criteria for inclusion of information/materials;
- education, public awareness, programs and presentations;
- incorporation of native languages in signage and interpretive materials
- receipt collection and accountability; and
- staffing and volunteers

Cultural and Historical Resources

The inventory, preservation, and management of cultural and historical resources are high priorities for the Tribes and need to be addressed at some level in the CCP. We have cooperated with the Service in this area in the past, and we look forward to continued collaboration through our Tribal Preservation Department. With respect to cultural and historical resources, the Tribes specifically request that the Service consult with us regarding these issues, consistent with Executive Order No. 13175 ("Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments"), the Department of the Interior Policy on Consultation with Indian Tribes, and the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. § 300101 *et seq.*).

Facilities maintenance

It would be helpful for the CCP to address facilities maintenance expectations, needs, budgets and costs for such facilities as the visitor center, residences, barns and other buildings, roundup facilities, picnic area toilets and structures, fences (exterior and interior), and trails.

Enforcement

Given the Service's Region 6 "Realignment Strategy Staffing Framework", and in light of that document's reference to a prioritization protocol for filling vacancies, the CCP should address the Service's expectations or outlook for enforcement responsibilities and jurisdictional impacts, as well as any cross-deputization expectations, needs or opportunities.

Personnel

Again, against the backdrop of budget projections and the above-referenced "Realignment Strategy Staffing Framework" and its associated protocols, the CCP should address the existing vacant positions, as well as expected, desired and potential positions looking forward. Staffing, and associated volunteer needs, at the National Bison Range, has been the subject of several articles in local/regional newspapers over recent months, so there is likely considerable public interest in understanding the Service's long-term outlook for Bison Range staffing.

The Tribes also believe the CCP/EIS should address Service actions to either recruit federal staff that have knowledge of Salish, Pend d'Oreille and Kootenai culture, or train existing staff with respect to those cultures, as the Canadian Wildlife Service does with respect to its designated wildlife areas and bird sanctuaries in indigenous areas (as mentioned above). This would not only have benefits for the staff and their interactions with the Tribes, but would also increase the ability of such staff to answer visitor questions or otherwise aid in public education on the history and culture surrounding the Bison Range.

On October 27, 2017, Chairman Vernon Finley sent a letter to Refuge Manager Jeff King requesting consultations for any NBRC position vacancies (*copy attached to this comment as Attachment #2)*.

Research

The CCP should also address any projected activities, or needs, regarding research concerning wildlife, habitat, animal health, genetics, or related issues.

Climate Change

In order to effectively look forward as a planning document, the CCP should address projected, likely, or potential impacts of climate change on habitat, species (fauna and flora), water, forage and wild fire impacts. The Tribes ask the Service to take into consideration the Tribes' Climate Change Strategic Plan, which was adopted in September 2013 and is available at www.csktribes.org/CSKTClimatePlan.pdf.

Fire

FWS, CSKT and the Bureau of Indian Affairs have historically entered into Annual Fire Management Operating Plan agreements addressing fire control at the National Bison Range.

The CCP should address the Service's plans, expectations, budget and cost outlooks for fire control, as well as controlled burns and other fire-related management issues.

Support for Tribal Participation & Cooperation at the National Bison Range

The CCP should address the potential for opportunities for cooperative efforts with the Tribes at the Bison Range. Support for such Tribal participation is strong. Below is a list of entities and organizations that have provided letters or resolutions of support for the Tribes' above-referenced draft Bison Range restoration legislation, or the restoration concept. It is logical to infer that the same entities and organizations would, for the same reasons as they support Bison Range restoration, also support other forms of Tribal participation and cooperation at the NBR.

1) National Wildlife Federation
2) Natural Resources Defense Council
3) Sierra Club
4) National Parks Conservation Association
5) The Wilderness Society
6) Montana Conservation Voters
7) Montana Environmental Information Center
8) Mission Mountain Audubon
9) Flathead Audubon
10) Five Valleys Audubon
11) Headwaters Montana
12) Flathead Reservation Human Rights Coalition
13) National Congress of American Indians
14) Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council
15) Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians
16) Iinii Buffalo Treaty Signatories
17) Nez Perce Tribe
18) Missoulian editorial board (*February 14, 2016*)

While a number of the above organizations are national, regional, or state-wide in scope, it is significant that some of the most frequent local users of the National Bison Range, represented by local Audubon chapters, support Bison Range restoration and Tribal management. All three of the local Audubon chapters have provided letters of support: Mission Mountain Audubon; Flathead Audubon; and Five Valleys Audubon.

The letters and resolutions from the above-listed organizations are attached to this comment as "Attachment #3".

History

We cannot move forward as effectively and intelligently as we desire unless we know our history. The Tribes believe that the Service should include in its CCP/EIS some history of the

National Bison Range. It is apparent from some of the public comments made in scoping meetings, as well as some written comments received in response to the original notice of intent, that many people are not familiar with the role of the Tribes with respect to the National Bison Range's initial herd, as well as the land itself. It is also apparent that there is a great deal of confusion and misinformation with respect to the past Tribal Self-Governance agreements at the National Bison Range. The CCP/EIS provides an opportunity to present the public with relevant facts.

Consultation

As a general matter, the Tribes request that the Service consult with us regarding National Bison Range issues in accordance with Executive Order No. 13175 ("Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments"), the Department of the Interior Policy on Consultation with Indian Tribes, and the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. § 300101 *et seq.*).

♦ ♦ ♦

The Tribes are happy to provide any additional information regarding the topics outlined in this scoping comment. For any inquiries, please contact either Tom McDonald, Manager, Fish, Wildlife, Recreation & Conservation Division, CSKT Natural Resources Department, or Brian Upton, Tribal Attorney, at (406) 275-2760, or (406) 675-2700, x1165.

CSKT Scoping Comment in Response to the "Notice of Intent to Prepare a Comprehensive Conservation Plan; Pablo, Lost Trail, and Ninepipe National Wildlife Refuges, and the Northwest Montana Wetland Management Districts, Montana"

August 15, 2017

In response to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's (FWS, or Service) May 18, 2017 notice of intent to prepare a Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) and accompanying Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Pablo, Lost Trail, and Ninepipe Refuges, as well as the Northwest Montana Wetlands Management District (NMWMD) (collectively, hereinafter referred to as the "subject Refuges"), all of which are currently part of the National Bison Range Complex (NBRC), the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Indian Reservation (CSKT, or Tribes) submit this scoping comment. During scoping meetings held in Polson and Kalispell, Montana on June 6th and 7th, respectively, FWS Refuge Planner Toni Griffin indicated that the Service would accept scoping comments beyond the June 19th date identified in the May 18th notice of intent, and would in fact accept them up until a draft EA was developed.

This comment identifies those areas which the Tribes believe should be addressed in the CCP. The Tribes understand that the CCP is a large undertaking, and that the Service may not be able to address all topics in great detail. While we address it specifically in some of the below-listed areas, the Tribes expect that the CCP would generally assist in helping the public understand how the Service expects the subject Refuges to operate as part of the newly-designated Western Montana National Wildlife Refuge Complex, as identified and discussed in the Service's Region 6 document titled "National Wildlife Refuge System Realignment Strategy and Staffing Framework", released in November of 2016.

To the extent that the subject Refuges are part of the existing NBRC, CSKT incorporates by reference into this comment the "CSKT Scoping Comment in Response to the Revised 'Notice of Intent to Prepare a Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the National Bison Range, Moiese, Montana", also dated August 15, 2017 and submitted to the Service.

The general issues identified below are not listed in any particular order, and are thus not necessarily identified in order of priority.

History and Tribal Interests in the Ninepipe and Pablo National Wildlife Refuges

The Ninepipe and Pablo Refuges, and the Lake County portion of the Northwest Montana Wetlands Management District, are all located within the Flathead Indian Reservation, which the Tribes reserved under the 1855 Treaty of Hellgate (12 Stat. 975). Both of the reservoirs located in the Ninepipe and Pablo Refuges are artificial bodies of water created early in the last century for irrigation purposes as part of the Flathead Indian Irrigation Project. The Ninepipe and Pablo Refuges are each on lands that are beneficially-owned by CSKT, and held in trust by the United States. At least as early as 1917, CSKT had requested the federal government to place conservation protections on both of these reservoir properties, to be set aside as game or bird

preserves. Consequently, President Warren G. Harding signed Executive Orders in 1921 creating what are now known as the Pablo and Ninepipe National Wildlife Refuges, for use as "refuge[s] and breeding grounds for native birds" (Executive Orders #3503 and #3504). The Executive Orders created the refuge areas "subject to Reclamation Service uses under the provisions of the act approved June 17, 1902 (32 Stat. 388), and to any other valid existing rights . . . ." [*emphasis added*] These existing rights include Tribal uses which have been subsequently recognized by Congress.

In 1948, Congress addressed and compensated the Tribes' claims for past federal uses of the Ninepipe and Pablo lands, and purchased from the Tribes perpetual easements to use Tribal land for the two Refuges. In § 5(b) of the Act of May 25, 1948 (62 Stat. 269), Congress authorized funds to be paid to the Tribes as full payment for a permanent easement for the Ninepipe and Pablo refuges. In so doing, Congress recognized, and preserved, the Tribes' reserved rights in both of the Refuge properties. Congress reiterated that the Tribes "shall have the right to use such tribal lands, and to grant leases and concessions thereon, for any and all purposes not inconsistent with such permanent easement." [1] Use of the term "inconsistent" in this legislation predates use of the word "compatibility" as an FWS term of art. The legislation governing compatible uses and compatibility determinations at Refuges was enacted later.

Agricultural activities on Ninepipe and Pablo Refuge lands have been a constant presence throughout the 20th century and up to the present. Shortly after creation of the refuges at the Ninepipe and Pablo reservoirs, FWS conducted or authorized agricultural activities on the lands. In the early 1940's, the Tribes, as the landowner, asserted that Tribal members should benefit from any agricultural activity on the property, as they had before the refuges had been created. Subsequently, Tribal members again utilized lands within the refuge boundaries. Tribal and FWS cooperation continued through the succeeding decades with respect to agricultural activities. This cooperation later led to a Memorandum of Understanding between FWS, CSKT and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) which recognized the farming program within the refuge "to be consistent with wildlife refuge purposes" and which was in effect throughout most of the 1990's.

In order to educate the public, as well as its own staff, the Tribes request that the Service include in its CCP/EA the history and legal status of the Ninepipe and Pablo Refuges. Much of the public may be unaware of the Tribes' ownership of the lands upon which those Refuges are located, as well as the Tribes' role in originally requesting that the lands be federally-designated as conservation areas. Similarly, many people are unaware that the Tribes granted a perpetual easement to the United States for use of the Ninepipe and Pablo properties for refuge purposes, and that, as part of that legislation, the Tribes retain congressionally-recognized reserved rights in those Refuges. The Tribes believe it is in both the Tribes' and FWS' interest in educating

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[1] For more information, including the Tribes' original requests for Ninepipe and Pablo to be set aside as bird/game preserves, as well as the congressional history, *see* Brian Upton, "Returning to a Tribal Self-Governance Partnership at the National Bison Range Complex: Historical, Legal, and Global Perspectives", 35 Public Land & Resources Law Review 52, at 77-78 (2014).
Accessible online at: http://scholarship.law.umt.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1423&context=plrlr.

people about this historical and legal landscape. We cannot move forward effectively and intelligently unless we know our history.

To this end, the Tribes appreciate that FWS, as part of its online CCP descriptions of the Pablo and Ninepipe Refuges, included statements about the Tribes requesting the establishment of the Refuges, as well as the Tribes managing the fisheries in each Refuge (https://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/refuges/nbrc.php).

Collaboration

The Tribes encourage cooperative efforts with the Tribes to be addressed in the EA under any alternatives identified during this scoping period, including the 'no action' alternative.

At this time, the Tribes do not believe that the CCP, and accompanying EA, should address as a specific management alternative Tribal management or cooperation through an agreement under the Tribal Self-Governance Act or other authority. The Tribes believe that any such analysis would be more appropriate and effective in a separate document that would accompany a future proposal or agreement. However, given the long history of cooperation and coordination between the Tribes and the Service, the Tribes believe it would be appropriate for the CCP/EA to acknowledge the history, and potential future, of Tribal cooperation at the subject Refuges, as well as generally address collaborative work with the Tribes.

As a general matter, development of this CCP provides an opportunity for FWS to examine how it interacts with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. It also provides a chance to examine the Ninepipe and Pablo Refuges, and the Lake County portions of the NMWMD, within the context of their location on the Flathead Indian Reservation – and the Lost Trail Refuge within the context of its location in the Tribes' aboriginal and treaty-ceded territory. Similarly, this is an opportunity to revisit how FWS interacts with Tribal citizens, the Reservation community, and the general public with respect to indigenous culture, language, and land uses. FWS may elect to do the minimum amount required with respect to these efforts, and generally approach this CCP as it would any other Refuge. Alternatively, FWS may elect to become a leader in how federal agencies in this country approach: 1) partnerships with tribal governments in Indian country; and 2) the federal trust responsibility towards tribes within the context of Refuge management. The Tribes encourage the latter approach.

The Tribes encourage the Service to examine, as one model, the forward-thinking approach of its Canadian counterpart. The Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS), by way of example, utilizes "Impact and Benefit Agreements" with respect to its management of National Wildlife Areas and Migratory Bird Sanctuaries within the indigenous Territory of Nunavut. While this is against the backdrop of a different legal landscape, the salient point is how the federal government of Canada has proactively chosen to engage, collaborate and interact with its aboriginal partners in Nunavut. As part of its management of National Wildlife Areas and Migratory Bird Sanctuaries in Nunavut, the CWS addresses the following issues, among many others:

- use of native language in CWS interpretive and other materials and activities, including place names;
- use of "traditional, current and evolving body of Inuit values, beliefs, experience, perceptions and knowledge regarding the environment";
- incorporation into management plans of cultural history and the context within which the wildlife areas or bird sanctuaries operate;
- development and use of oral histories
- use of aboriginal guides;
- explicit consultation procedures to ensure substantive, rather than superficial, consultation;
- explicit evaluation and tracking activities to measure progress on achieving these objectives; and
- criteria for hiring CWS staff working within Nunavut, including knowledge of: Inuit culture, society and economy; native language; and knowledge of laws relevant to the Inuit/Nunavut legal landscape.

Among many other things, these agreements provide for incorporation of native languages, staff training, and traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) into Western science. As stated on FWS' website, "[a]n increasing number of scientists and Native people believe that Western Science and TEK are complementary."[2] The Tribes believe that this CCP presents an opportunity for FWS to encourage field-level implementation of the agency's policy statements regarding TEK.

Bird, Waterfowl and Migratory Bird Management

Given that bird and bird habitat conservation were the primary motivations for the Tribes to request the United States to designate Pablo and Ninepipe as conservation areas, we expect that these purposes will be prominently addressed in the CCP, including with respect to the rest of the subject Refuges. The CCP should address specific bird populations and management, including Trumpeter swans, and cooperative efforts on same.

Wildlife and Fisheries Management

The Tribes expect big game species management to be addressed in the CCP. The Tribes would also expect that predator management (including, among other species, black bear, grizzly bear, gray wolf, coyote, mountain lion, golden eagle, and bald eagle) would be addressed by the CCP. Other wildlife, including turtles, should also be addressed as necessary.

The Tribes recommend that the CCP address surveying and monitoring of nongame birds, as well as amphibians and reptiles. As mentioned earlier, the Tribes further recommend that the CCP acknowledge the Tribes' role in fisheries management at the Ninepipe and Pablo Refuges.

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2 *See* https://www.fws.gov/nativeamerican/pdf/tek-fact-sheet.pdf

Habitat Management

Reservoir conditions, range conditions, weed management, Russian olive tree issues, fire management, riparian management, wetland management, and water management issues are all components of habitat management that should be addressed in the CCP.

Aquatic Invasive Species

The Tribes believe that the CCP should address contingencies for aquatic invasive species, whose profile has recently been elevated in Montana.

Public Use and Access

The CCP provides an opportunity to examine and plan for such public use/access considerations as: visitation projections; desired visitor experiences; fishing access; wildlife watching and photography opportunities; recreation site (picnic areas) availability and management; fee structures; and the possibility of tours.

With respect to access by citizens of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, the Tribes believe that the existing Memorandum of Agreement between FWS and CSKT governing access to the Ninepipe and Pablo Refuges (as well as to the National Bison Range) has worked well.

Visitor Services

The Tribes anticipate that the CCP would address visitor services issues for the subject Refuges, including how they could be incorporated into the only visitor center serving the NBRC on the Flathead Indian Reservation, which is located at the National Bison Range in Moiese. These issues should include, at minimum:

- interpretive displays, materials and sale items;
- information availability and standards/criteria for inclusion of information/materials;
- education, public awareness, programs and presentations;
- staffing and volunteers; and
- incorporation of native languages in signage and interpretive materials

Cultural and Historical Resources

The inventory, preservation, and management of cultural and historical resources are high priorities for the Tribes and need to be addressed at some level in the CCP. We have cooperated with the Service in this area in the past, and we look forward to continued collaboration through our Tribal Preservation Department. The Tribes request that the Service consult with us regarding these issues, consistent with Executive Order No. 13175 ("Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments"), the Department of the Interior Policy on Consultation with Indian Tribes, and the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. § 300101 *et seq.*).

Facilities maintenance

It would be helpful for the CCP to address facilities maintenance expectations, needs, budgets and costs for such facilities, including fences (exterior and interior) and trails.

Enforcement

Given the Service's Region 6 "Realignment Strategy Staffing Framework", and in light of that document's reference to a prioritization protocol for filling vacancies, the CCP should address the Service's expectations or outlook for enforcement responsibilities and jurisdictional impacts, as well as any cross-deputization expectations, needs or opportunities.

Personnel

Again, against the backdrop of budget projections and the above-referenced "Realignment Strategy Staffing Framework" and its associated protocols, the CCP should address the existing vacant positions, as well as expected, desired and potential positions looking forward.

The Tribes also believe the CCP should address Service actions to either recruit federal staff that have knowledge of Salish, Pend d'Oreille and Kootenai culture, or train existing staff with respect to those cultures, as the Canadian Wildlife Service does with respect to its designated wildlife areas and bird sanctuaries in indigenous areas. This would not only have benefits for the staff and their interactions with the Tribes, but would also increase the ability of such staff to answer visitor questions or otherwise aid in public education on the history and culture surrounding the subject Refuges. This has particular relevance to the Ninepipe and Pablo Refuges, which are located on land currently beneficially-owned by the Tribes (federal trust ownership for the Tribes) and in which the Tribes have reserved rights.

On October 27, 2017, Chairman Vernon Finley sent a letter to Refuge Manager Jeff King requesting consultations for any NBRC position vacancies.

Research

The CCP should also address any projected activities, or needs, regarding research concerning wildlife, habitat, animal health, genetics, or related issues.

Climate Change

In order to effectively look forward as a planning document, the CCP should address projected, likely, or potential impacts of climate change on habitat, species (fauna and flora), water, forage and wild fire impacts. The Tribes would ask the Service to take into consideration the Tribes' Climate Change Strategic Plan, which was adopted in September 2013 and is available at www.csktribes.org/CSKTClimatePlan.pdf.

Fire

FWS, CSKT and the Bureau of Indian Affairs have historically entered into Annual Fire Management Operating Plan agreements addressing fire control at the National Bison Range. The CCP should address the Service's plans, expectations, budget and cost outlooks for fire control, as well as controlled burns and other fire-related management issues for the Subject Refuges.

Traditional Ecological Knowledge

For the most part, FWS does not proactively seek to discover, apply, or educate the public about traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) at the Subject Refuges. As mentioned above, the Tribes encourage the Service to use this CCP process as an opportunity to revisit how it may approach TEK with respect to Ninepipe, Pablo, Lost Trail and the NMWMD. The above-referenced Canadian Wildlife Service "Impact and Benefit Agreements" with Inuit government in Nunavut provide one model for such an approach.

Consultation

As a general matter, the Tribes request that the Service consult with us regarding the subject Refuges in accordance with Executive Order No. 13175 ("Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments"), the Department of the Interior Policy on Consultation with Indian Tribes, and the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. § 300101 *et seq.*).

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The Tribes are happy to provide any additional information regarding the topics outlined in this scoping comment. For any inquiries, please contact Brian Upton, Tribal Attorney, at (406) 275-2760, or (406) 675-2700, x1165.

From:	Hogan, Kelly
To:	McCollister, Matthew; Bernardo Garza
Subject:	Fwd: CSKT scoping comments for NBR CCP/EIS and Ninepipe/Pablo/Lost Trail CCP/EA
Date:	Wednesday, August 16, 2017 5:40:36 AM
Attachments:	CSKT Scoping Comments 8-15-17 Cvr Ltr.pdf CSKT NBR Scoping Comment 8-15-17.pdf CSKT Pablo-Ninepipe Scoping Comment 8-15-17l.pdf

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FYI
---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Brian Upton** <Brian.Upton@cskt.org>
Date: Tue, Aug 15, 2017 at 4:01 PM
Subject: CSKT scoping comments for NBR CCP/EIS and Ninepipe/Pablo/Lost Trail CCP/EA
To: "Kelly Hogan (kelly_hogan@fws.gov)" <kelly_hogan@fws.gov>,
"toni_griffin@fws.gov" <toni_griffin@fws.gov>
Cc: "scoping_pablo_ninepipe@fws.gov" <scoping_pablo_ninepipe@fws.gov>,
"scoping_NBR@fws.gov" <scoping_NBR@fws.gov>

Hi Toni and Kelly,

Attached are CSKT's scoping comments with respect to the National Bison Range CCP/EIS and the Ninepipe/Pablo/Lost Trail CCP/EA. I will send hard copies in the mail to you, including the referenced attachments. I will also send you a thumb drive with the scoping comments and attachments in digital form. Please let me know if you have any problems opening the attached files.

Thanks,
Brian Upton, Tribal Attorney

Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes Legal Department

P.O. Box 278

Pablo, MT 59855

office phone: (406) 275-2760, or (406) 675-2700, x1165

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Maureen Gallagher
Cc:	Kelly Hogan
Subject:	Fwd: Heads up
Date:	Wednesday, August 16, 2017 8:44:58 AM
Attachments:	National Bison Range_Bulletin_3rd meeting.docx

Good morning Maureen,

I'm trying to get the attached Press Release back to EA today so they can distribute it to mass media outlets in MT.

Would you mind reviewing it and letting me know if you want changes made to it?

Thanks,

Bernardo

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Munoz, Anna** <anna_munoz@fws.gov>
Date: Tue, Aug 15, 2017 at 2:20 PM
Subject: Fwd: Heads up
To: "Garza, Bernardo" <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>

Anna Muñoz
Assistant Regional Director - External Affairs
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office: 303-236-4510
Cell: 720-648-2542

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Ryan Moehring** <ryan_moehring@fws.gov>
Date: Mon, Aug 14, 2017 at 2:34 PM
Subject: RE: Heads up
To: Anna Munoz <anna_munoz@fws.gov>, Roya Mogadam <roya_mogadam@fws.gov>

Apologies for the email onslaught. Bernardo just reviewed and only had one minor correction, which is reflected in this updated draft.

Thanks,

Ryan

Ryan Moehring

Public Affairs

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Mountain-Prairie Region

303-236-0345

From: Ryan Moehring [mailto:ryan_moehring@fws.gov]
Sent: Monday, August 14, 2017 2:31 PM
To: Anna Munoz (anna_munoz@fws.gov); Roya Mogadam
Subject: RE: Heads up

Update: I made some time and wrote a quick draft, which is currently with Bernardo for an accuracy review.

Thanks,

Ryan

Ryan Moehring

Public Affairs

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Mountain-Prairie Region

303-236-0345

From: Ryan Moehring [mailto:ryan_moehring@fws.gov]
Sent: Monday, August 14, 2017 1:56 PM
To: Anna Munoz (anna_munoz@fws.gov); Roya Mogadam
Subject: Heads up

Two things:

1) I found out from UT that PETPO is going to file a stay today, which should bump out the mandate at least another week. I have a call in to the SOL to confirm.

2) Bernardo stopped by to inform me that the CSKT, MT FWP, and other cooperators around the NBR CCP planning effort have requested a third public meeting. Planning has already secured a meeting room in Missoula for the 30th of this month. In order to give the public two weeks' notice we would need to issue a NR this Wednesday. I'll be out of pocket most of the day tomorrow for the Ferret Center event and can gin something up very quickly that afternoon or Wednesday morning, but that doesn't give us enough time to surname. Can we get away with a quick review from one of you and maybe Will, or is there another way you would like to approach?

Thanks,

Ryan

Ryan Moehring

Public Affairs

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Mountain-Prairie Region

303-236-0345

Web |Facebook | Twitter | Flickr | YouTube

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Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

News Bulletin

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mountain-Prairie Region
134 Union Boulevard
Lakewood, Colorado 80228

For Immediate Release
August 16, 2017

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to Host a Third Public Meeting for National Bison Range Planning Efforts

Contact: Ryan Moehring, (303) 236-0345; Ryan_Moehring@fws.gov

DENVER – As part of its ongoing efforts to protect America's national mammal, the American bison, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is inviting the public to attend a third scoping meeting to help shape future management options for the National Bison Range Complex in western Montana.

This invitation follows an announcement made earlier this year in which the Service published a revised notice of intent to prepare comprehensive conservation plans (CCPs) and accompanying environmental analysis for the National Bison Range and the rest of the units that make up the National Bison Range Complex.

That announcement opened a 30-day public comment period, which began on May 18, 2017 and included two public meetings, one in Polson and another in Kalispell. This third meeting was requested by planning partners, in an effort to provide the public with additional opportunities to familiarize themselves with the various management options being considered.

Once finalized, the CCPs will outline the resource management goals and wildlife-dependent visitor recreational opportunities for the National Bison Range and the other units that make up the Complex over the next 15 years.

Information about the meeting is as follows:

Date: Wednesday, August 30, 2017
Time: 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Location: Missoula Public Library, large meeting room
Address: 301 East Main, Missoula, MT 59802
Venue Phone: 406-721-2665

The meeting will follow an informal open-house format. A brief presentation will be given at 7:00 p.m., but attendees are invited to arrive any time after 6:00 p.m. to meet with Service personnel, learn more about the CCP process, and provide input.

To learn more about the National Bison Range visit: https://www.fws.gov/refuge/national_bison_range/.

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For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie, and connect us at www.facebook.com/USFWSMountainPrairie, http://twitter.com/USFWSMtnPrairie, www.youtube.com/usfws and www.flickr.com/photos/usfwsmtnprairie.

–FWS–

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Jeff King; Kevin Shinn
Subject:	Need Your Advise/Help
Date:	Wednesday, August 16, 2017 9:13:32 AM

Good morning guys,

Before our conference call conversation of yesterday, Kelly, Matt and I had made travel reservations to NBR from Monday (Aug. 28) through Friday (Sept. 1) because we anticipated that the meeting for Lost Trail, Pablo, Ninepipe, and the WMDs would take 2 days (Wednesday morning for Pablo, Ninepipe and the Lake Co WMD, and Thursday morning for Lost Trail and Flathead Co WMD).

However, yesterday I heard from you that we should be able to scope for issues for all units of the Complex in the CCP/EA during the morning and maybe a couple hours of the afternoon of Wednesday (Aug. 30).

Since we had made travel reservations that included staying all of Thursday, now we are confronted with either making changes to our travel reservations to return to Denver on Thursday, or finding something to do related to the CCPs on Thursday.

So I would ask if you have any suggestions/advise for us.

Kelly suggested to begin working on developing a draft vision and goals for the Complex. However, I told him that, once we sign the MOU with the cooperating agencies (Aug. 29), those agencies have to be involved in every meeting related to the NBR CCP. And I think that trying to organize a Purposes, Vision and Goals workshop in two weeks and expect our cooperating agencies to participate in it is unrealistic.

In a "normal" CCP development process, during pre-planning, we have an opportunity to tour the different units of planning area to become acquainted with the issues and resources. Maybe we could visit Ninepipe, Pablo, and the WMD's WPAs...

Or maybe we could have another meeting with the Complex staff, if you believe this would be productive and not a burden on the staff's schedule. Kelly, Matt and I felt that the meeting we had a couple weeks ago in Ninepipes Lodge was very productive and created more understanding between your staff and those of us from the RO.

Maybe something else?

Please advise if you have any suggestions.

By the way, we've reserved use of the North Lake Public Library (2 1st Ave E, Polson, MT 59860) meeting room for the Aug. 30th meeting. We can use the meeting room starting at 9 am.

Take care

--

Bernardo Garza

Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From:	King, Jeff
To:	Garza, Bernardo
Cc:	Kevin Shinn
Subject:	Re: Need Your Advise/Help
Date:	Wednesday, August 16, 2017 9:47:14 AM

Bernardo,

My recommendation is to devote time to the Flathead County portion of the WMD. Kevin has some unique issues (Flathead WPA, Blasdel, etc...) that he's dealing with. I think all of you have seen Lost Trail but not sure if Kevin thinks it would be productive to spend additional time there. Kevin: chime in if you are thinking something different.

Just my thoughts now. I'll give it some additional thought and let you know.

Thanks,

jk

Jeff King, Project Leader
National Bison Range Complex
58355 Bison Range Road
Moiese, MT 59824
(406) 644-2211, ext. 204

On Wed, Aug 16, 2017 at 9:13 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Good morning guys,
>
> Before our conference call conversation of yesterday, Kelly, Matt and I had made travel reservations to NBR from Monday (Aug. 28) through Friday (Sept. 1) because we anticipated that the meeting for Lost Trail, Pablo, Ninepipe, and the WMDs would take 2 days (Wednesday morning for Pablo, Ninepipe and the Lake Co WMD, and Thursday morning for Lost Trail and Flathead Co WMD).
>
> However, yesterday I heard from you that we should be able to scope for issues for all units of the Complex in the CCP/EA during the morning and maybe a couple hours of the afternoon of Wednesday (Aug. 30).
>
> Since we had made travel reservations that included staying all of Thursday, now we are confronted with either making changes to our travel reservations to return to Denver on Thursday, or finding something to do related to the CCPs on Thursday.
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Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From:	Ryan Moehring
To:	Bernardo Garza
Subject:	RE: Any news?
Date:	Monday, August 21, 2017 1:13:59 PM
Attachments:	National Bison Range_Bulletin_3rd meeting.docx

You're welcome. Attached.

Thanks,
Ryan

Ryan Moehring
Public Affairs
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mountain-Prairie Region
303-236-0345

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Monday, August 21, 2017 12:53 PM
To: Ryan Moehring
Subject: Re: Any news?

Thank you Ryan.

Please forward the final press release to me so I can send it to the NBR staff

On Mon, Aug 21, 2017 at 10:30 AM, Ryan Moehring <ryan_moehring@fws.gov> wrote:
Just got approval. Will issue this afternoon.

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 21, 2017, at 9:57 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Hello Ryan,
>
> Do you know what has happened with the NBR CCP meeting press release?

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

News Bulletin

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mountain-Prairie Region
134 Union Boulevard
Lakewood, Colorado 80228

For Immediate Release
August 21, 2017

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to Host a Third Public Meeting for National Bison Range Planning Efforts

Contact: Ryan Moehring, (303) 236-0345; Ryan_Moehring@fws.gov

DENVER – As part of ongoing efforts to maximize public input in its decision making, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is inviting the public to attend a third scoping meeting to help shape future management options for the National Bison Range Complex in western Montana.

This invitation follows an announcement made earlier this year in which the Service published a revised notice of intent to prepare comprehensive conservation plans (CCPs) and accompanying environmental analysis for the National Bison Range and the rest of the units that make up the National Bison Range Complex.

That announcement opened a 30-day public comment period, which began on May 18, 2017 and included two public meetings, one in Polson and another in Kalispell. This third meeting was requested by planning partners, in an effort to provide the public with additional opportunities to familiarize themselves with the various management options being considered.

Once finalized, the CCPs will outline the resource management goals and wildlife-dependent visitor recreational opportunities for the National Bison Range and the other units that make up the Complex over the next 15 years.

Information about the meeting is as follows:

Date: Wednesday, August 30, 2017
Time: 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Location: Missoula Public Library, large meeting room
Address: 301 East Main, Missoula, MT 59802
Venue Phone: 406-721-2665
The meeting will follow an informal open-house format. A brief presentation will be given at 7:00 p.m., but attendees are invited to arrive any time after 6:00 p.m. to meet with Service personnel, learn more about the CCP process, and provide input.

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–FWS–

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Brian Upton; Kelly Hogan
Bcc:	Jeff King; Kevin Shinn
Subject:	3rd Public Scoping Meeting Press Release
Date:	Monday, August 21, 2017 1:35:09 PM
Attachments:	National Bison Range_Bulletin_3rd meeting (2).docx

---

It was finally approved an hour ago.

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

News Bulletin

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mountain-Prairie Region
134 Union Boulevard
Lakewood, Colorado 80228

For Immediate Release
August 21, 2017

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Contact: Ryan Moehring, (303) 236-0345; Ryan_Moehring@fws.gov

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–FWS–

From: Ryan Moehring
To: Bernardo Garza; Bernie Petersen; Amy Thornburg; Jeff King
Subject: FW: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to Host a Third Public Meeting for National Bison Range Planning Efforts
Date: Monday, August 21, 2017 6:32:15 PM

FYI. This is out on the streets. Let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,
Ryan

Ryan Moehring
Public Affairs
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mountain-Prairie Region
303-236-0345

From: fw6media@fws.gov [mailto:fw6media@fws.gov]
Sent: Monday, August 21, 2017 6:24 PM
To: ryan_moehring@fws.gov
Subject: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to Host a Third Public Meeting for National Bison Range Planning Efforts

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

News Release

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mountain-Prairie Region
134 Union Blvd., Lakewood, Colorado 80228
http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie

For Immediate Release
August 21, 2017

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to Host a Third Public Meeting for National Bison Range Planning Efforts

Contact: Ryan Moehring, (303) 236-0345; Ryan_Moehring@fws.gov

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–FWS–

This email was sent to ryan_moehring@fws.gov
US Fish and Wildlife Service, 134 Union Blvd, Lakewood, CO 80228, USA
Unsubscribe

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Jeff King; Kevin Shinn
Cc:	Laura King
Subject:	Public Meetings Announcement
Date:	Tuesday, August 22, 2017 11:46:32 AM

Jeff and Kevin,

Good morning. I hope you are doing very well and mentally preparing for next week's meetings.

Kelly, Matt and I will arrive on Monday afternoon and will stay at the Ninepipes Lodge while we are in MT. On Tuesday we will be leading the Coop Agencies meeting, and Wednesday we will lead the public meeting in Polson (the one for all the other units of the NBR Complex) as well as the evening meeting in Missoula. We are planning on visiting Pablo NWR, Ninepipe NWR, and as many WPAs in the two WMDs as we can. But we will also be available anytime on Thursday if you would like to meet with us to talk about the CCPs or any other issues you would like to discuss.

Bernie and Dee Emmons will also travel to MT to attend the Coop Agencies meeting. I do not know the rest of their travel details.

In looking at next week's meetings I have a few thoughts, questions and requests to share with you. Please let me know what you think and whether you can help me.

Thoughts/Questions

Laura is working on developing a flyer to announce next week's Missoula public scoping meeting at the local level. Since we will also have the meeting in Polson on Wednesday morning/early afternoon, I was thinking that it might be good to announce both meetings in the same flyer: the morning meeting in Polson and the evening meeting in Missoula. This way we will ensure that the Polson meeting is seen in its correct context: that of a scoping meeting open to all the public.

Have you been able to contact MTGFP, NRDA, and the other agencies and groups that you wanted to meet with to let them know about the Aug. 30 meeting in Polson?

Requests

Would it be possible to use your projector and laptop once again for the Tuesday and Wednesday meetings? I know that one of the venues that we'll be using on Wednesday has its own projector, but I think it would be prudent if we brought a projector with us to each of the Wednesday meetings just in case. And for sure we will need to use the projector for the Coop Agencies meeting on Tuesday in Charlo.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Shinn, Kevin
To: Garza, Bernardo
Cc: Jeff King; Laura King
Subject: Re: Public Meetings Announcement
Date: Tuesday, August 22, 2017 2:57:09 PM

Bernardo,

Sounds like the best option for the flyer.

I have left messages, but have not heard confirmation from all yet.

I think Jeff's comment on showing you all the Flathead County WPA's, especially Flathead WPA, Blasdel WPA, and potentially Smith Lake WPA because of the specific issues we have at those sites. So hopefully we can devote some time for those.

Thanks

On Tue, Aug 22, 2017 at 11:46 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Jeff and Kevin,
>
> Good morning. I hope you are doing very well and mentally preparing for next week's meetings.
>
> Kelly, Matt and I will arrive on Monday afternoon and will stay at the Ninepipes Lodge while we are in MT. On Tuesday we will be leading the Coop Agencies meeting, and Wednesday we will lead the public meeting in Polson (the one for all the other units of the NBR Complex) as well as the evening meeting in Missoula. We are planning on visiting Pablo NWR, Ninepipe NWR, and as many WPAs in the two WMDs as we can. But we will also be available anytime on Thursday if you would like to meet with us to talk about the CCPs or any other issues you would like to discuss.
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>
> **Thoughts/Questions**
>
> Laura is working on developing a flyer to announce next week's Missoula public scoping meeting at the local level. Since we will also have the meeting in Polson on Wednesday morning/early afternoon, I was thinking that it might be good to announce both meetings in the same flyer: the morning meeting in Polson and the evening meeting in Missoula. This way we will ensure that the Polson meeting is seen in its correct context: that of a scoping meeting open to all the public.
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Please let me know if you have any questions.

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Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, **Mountain-Prairie Region**
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

--
Kevin J. Shinn
Manager/Federal Wildlife Officer
Lost Trail NWR/NW Montana WMD
406-858-2216 Office
406-260-5192 cell

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Shinn, Kevin
Cc: Jeff King; Laura King
Subject: Re: Public Meetings Announcement
Date: Tuesday, August 22, 2017 3:00:58 PM

Thanks for the update Kevin

On Tue, Aug 22, 2017 at 2:57 PM, Shinn, Kevin <kevin_shinn@fws.gov> wrote:

> Bernardo,
>
> Sounds like the best option for the flyer.
>
> I have left messages, but have not heard confirmation from all yet.
>
> I think Jeff's comment on showing you all the Flathead County WPA's, especially Flathead WPA, Blasdel WPA, and potentially Smith Lake WPA because of the specific issues we have at those sites. So hopefully we can devote some time for those.
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> Thanks
>
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>
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> >
> > **Thoughts/Questions**
> >
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--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
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Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: King, Laura
To: Bernardo Garza
Subject: flyer suggesiton
Date: Tuesday, August 22, 2017 9:39:23 PM
Attachments: NBR CCP flyer.pptx

Hi Bernardo,

Attached is the flyer we discussed. I modified it to include the second meeting planned in Polson, as you suggested. Jeff looked at this and thought it looked good. Please feel free to offer any suggestions. I would have time to put these up in the surrounding communities on Thursday. I can also send some home with one of our SCA students who lives in Missoula; however, I don't think that would be as effective as an article in the Missoulian and on our website to reach folks in Missoula. It's just too big. I do think this method will be effective in this community; however, the distance to Missoula might still be a deterrent--we will see.

Please feel free to share any thoughts you have. I'll be in my meeting with the Bear River team tomorrow but I'll be checking my email.

Thanks,

Laura

Laura King, Refuge Program Specialist

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
National Bison Range
Moiese, MT 59824
phone, 406-644-2211, ext. 203
fax, 406-644-2661

Visit our website at http://www.fws.gov/refuge/national_bison_range/
AND check out the National Bison Range on Facebook!!

National Bison Range Refuge Complex
Long Range Planning Public Meetings

rpose: Discuss the future management of the National Bison Ran
epipe National Wildlife Refuge, Pablo National Wildlife Refuge, L
Trail National Wildlife Refuge, and 14 Waterfowl Production Area

IEN: August 30, 2017
IERE: Public Library
DRESS: 301 East Main, Missoula, MT
IE: 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
estions: 406-644-2211, ext. 0

WHEN: August 30, 2017
WHERE: Public Library
ADDRESS: 2 1st Ave E, Polson, MT
TIME: 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Questions: 406-644-2211, ext. 0

Suggested Topics For Public to Discuss

- Public Use Opportunities
- Wildlife Photography
- Nature Trails and Roads
- Day Use Area at National Bison Range
- Vacant Positions and Future Staffing
- Volunteer Program
- Education Programs for Students
- Visitor Center and other Facilities

- Bison Management and Genetics
- Elk, Pronghorn, and Deer Managemen
- Wildlife Health
- Bighorn Sheep Disease and Managem
- Invasive Plant Species and Manageme
- Hunting and Fishing opportunities
- Historic Blasdel Barn (Blasdel WPA)
- Y-i-f-h-l-i

From: King, Laura
To: Bernardo Garza
Subject: Fwd: flyer suggesiton
Date: Tuesday, August 22, 2017 9:42:13 PM
Attachments: NBR CCP flyer.pptx

Actually---this one. Delete previous version...

Laura

Laura King, Refuge Program Specialist

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
National Bison Range
Moiese, MT 59824
phone, 406-644-2211, ext. 203
fax, 406-644-2661

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AND check out the National Bison Range on Facebook!!

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **King, Laura** <laura_king@fws.gov>
Date: Tue, Aug 22, 2017 at 9:38 PM
Subject: flyer suggesiton
To: Bernardo Garza <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>

Hi Bernardo,

Attached is the flyer we discussed. I modified it to include the second meeting planned in Polson, as you suggested. Jeff looked at this and thought it looked good. Please feel free to offer any suggestions. I would have time to put these up in the surrounding communities on Thursday. I can also send some home with one of our SCA students who lives in Missoula; however, I don't think that would be as effective as an article in the Missoulian and on our website to reach folks in Missoula. It's just too big. I do think this method will be effective in this community; however, the distance to Missoula might still be a deterrent--we will see.

Please feel free to share any thoughts you have. I'll be in my meeting with the Bear River team tomorrow but I'll be checking my email.

Thanks,

Laura

Laura King, Refuge Program Specialist

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
National Bison Range
Moiese, MT 59824
phone, 406-644-2211, ext. 203
fax, 406-644-2661

Visit our website at http://www.fws.gov/refuge/national_bison_range/
AND check out the National Bison Range on Facebook!!

National Bison Range Refuge Complex
Long Range Planning Public Meetings

rpose: Discuss the future management of the National Bison Ran
epipe National Wildlife Refuge, Pablo National Wildlife Refuge, L
Trail National Wildlife Refuge, and 14 Waterfowl Production Area

IEN: August 30, 2017
IERE: Public Library
DRESS: 301 East Main, Missoula, MT
IE: 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
estions: 406-644-2211, ext. 0

WHEN: August 30, 2017
WHERE: Public Library
ADDRESS: 2 1st Ave E, Polson, MT
TIME: 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Questions: 406-644-2211, ext. 0

Suggested Topics For Public to Discuss

- Public Use Opportunities
- Wildlife Photography
- Nature Trails and Roads
- Day Use Area at National Bison Range
- Vacant Positions and Future Staffing
- Bird Watching Opportunities
- Education Programs for Students

- Bison Management and Genetics
- Elk, Pronghorn, and Deer Managemen
- Wildlife Health
- Bighorn Sheep Disease and Managem
- Invasive Plant Species and Manageme
- Hunting and Fishing opportunities
- Historic Blasdel Barn (Blasdel WPA)

From: Jennifer Ekberg
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: RE: Meeting Time: Cooperating Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process
Date: Wednesday, August 23, 2017 2:40:03 PM

Good Afternoon Bernardo,
Commissioner Magera from Sanders County will be attending the meeting.

Thank you,

Jennifer Ekberg
Administrative Assistant
Board of Commissioners
Sanders County, Montana
P.O. Box 519
Thompson Falls, MT 59873
Ph. (406) 827-6966
Fax (406) 827-4388

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From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Thursday, August 10, 2017 8:41 AM
To: Jennifer Ekberg <jekberg@co.sanders.mt.us>
Subject: Re: Meeting Time: Cooperating Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process

Jennifer,

Thank you for all your help in scheduling the meeting. I understand how busy things are and I do hope Sanders County will be able to join us on August 29.

Have a great day.

Bernardo Garza

On Wed, Aug 9, 2017 at 4:54 PM, Jennifer Ekberg <jekberg@co.sanders.mt.us> wrote:

> Bernard,
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From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, August 09, 2017 1:52 PM
To: Jennifer Ekberg <jekberg@co.sanders.mt.us>
Subject: Re: Meeting Time: Cooperating Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process

Jennifer,

The meeting is scheduled to start at 9 am and end around 2:30 pm, followed by a tour of the National Bison Range or another national wildlife refuge in the area for those interested in participating.

Thank you for considering the schedule

On Wed, Aug 9, 2017 at 11:39 AM, Jennifer Ekberg <jekberg@co.sanders.mt.us> wrote:

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Thank you Jennifer.

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Moving the date to the 30th is not possible as we already have two other meetings that day: one that will last most of the day (probably 8:30 to 3:30) and then a public meeting in Missoula in the evening (probably 6:00 to 8:30 pm).

Since Labor Day is observed on Monday, Sept. 4, we believe that most agency representatives don't want to be traveling on Friday, Sept. 1.

Is there any way for Sanders County representatives to join us on the 29th?

Bernardo

On Wed, Aug 9, 2017 at 11:21 AM, Jennifer Ekberg <jekberg@co.sanders.mt.us> wrote:

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> I have received your phone message. I will be in meetings during the time that you come back from a conference call today. I thought it might be easier for you to respond to my email.
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From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Jennifer Ekberg
Subject: Re: Meeting Time: Cooperating Agencies Meeting - National Bison Range planning process
Date: Wednesday, August 23, 2017 3:31:04 PM

Thank you so much for letting me know Jennifer. I look forward to working with Sanders County in this important planning process.

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From: King, Laura
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: Meeting Flyer
Date: Thursday, August 24, 2017 8:08:35 AM
Attachments: NBR CCP flyer.pptx

See what you think of this revised flyer...

If you give the green light we'll post it today.

BTW, I checked our main local paper, the Valley Journal, and there isn't anything about the public meeting next Wedesday. This free paper only gets published once a week and won't come out again until next Wednesday. This is definitely a main conduit for sharing information in this valley. I know there is nothing you can do now but I wanted to let you know. I know there was a delay in releasing the news release for publication that was out of your control.

Thanks,

Laura

Laura King, Refuge Program Specialist

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AND check out the National Bison Range on Facebook!!

On Wed, Aug 23, 2017 at 3:46 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Hi Laura,
>
> Sorry I couldn't get back to you sooner with my comments on the great flyer you put together to announce next week's meetings.
>
> These are my comments:
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> 1) I'd suggest we announce that the Polson meeting will begin at 9:30 instead of 8:30 - the

reason is that the library opens at 10 am, but we'll be given access to the meeting room at 9:00. If people arrive by 8:30, or even by 9:00, we won't have time to set up the meeting room for the meeting.

2) we should specify that the Missoula meeting is in the main branch of the Public Library (apparently there are a few branches throughout Missoula, and we want to minimize confusion).

3) I might be wrong, but I believe that the name of the public library in Polson is "North Lake County Public Library". It might be good to point that out in the flyer, again, to avoid confusion.

4) I might suggest switching the "sides" of the two windows with the meeting details (i.e., the Polson meeting in the left side of the flyer, and the Missoula meeting in the right side of the flyer)

Question:

Do you think it might make sense or be a good idea to somehow mention that for the Polson meeting we are looking more for comments for Lost Trail, Pablo, Ninepipe, and the WMDs than for NBR? Just a thought...

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, **Mountain-Prairie Region**
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National Bison Range Refuge Complex
We Need To Hear From the Public!

se: Listen to public's ideas and issues related to the current and future manager
e National Bison Range, Ninepipe National Wildlife Refuge, Pablo National Wild
ge, Lost Trail National Wildlife Refuge, and 14 Waterfowl Production Areas (WP

For Questions Call: 406-644-2211, ext. 0 or visit www.fws.gov/refuge/National_Bison_Range

EN: August 30, 2017
ERE: North Lake County Public Library
DRESS: 2 1st Ave E, Polson, MT
IE: 9:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.
us: Ninepipe, Pablo, Lost Trail, WPAs

WHEN: August 30, 2017
WHERE: Public Library, Main Branch
ADDRESS: 301 East Main, Missoula, MT
TIME: 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Focus: All refuge Units

Suggested Topics For Public to Discuss

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- Wildlife Photography
- Nature Trails and Roads
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- Vacant Positions and Future Staffing
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- Bighorn Sheep Disease and Manageme
- Invasive Plant Species and Managemer
- Hunting and Fishing opportunities
- Historic Blasdel Barn (Blasdel WPA)

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: King, Laura
Subject: Re: Meeting Flyer
Date: Thursday, August 24, 2017 8:51:00 AM

Yes, I certainly hope so.

Thanks for all the hard work and all your help Laura.

I'll inform BIA, Lake and Sanders Counties, and CSKT of the meeting in Polson as well.

On Thu, Aug 24, 2017 at 8:33 AM, King, Laura <laura_king@fws.gov> wrote:

> Ok Bernardo. Will do.
>
> Yes, then that is the issue. The Valley Journal's deadline for this weeks paper was last Friday. Like I said, I know the release of this announcement was out of your hands as well as Ryan's, which was unfortunate.
>
> Hopefully the flyers will make up for that a little.
>
> Laura
>
> ***Laura King, Refuge Program Specialist***
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>
> > Looks very good Laura. Go ahead and distribute it.
> >
> > Ryan Moehring told me that on Monday he sent the press release to over 200 reporters (I forwarded you the email).
> >
> > On Thu, Aug 24, 2017 at 8:07 AM, King, Laura <laura_king@fws.gov> wrote:
> >
> > > See what you think of this revised flyer...
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> > --
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From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Brian Upton; David Redhorse; Gale Decker; Jennifer Ekberg
Bcc:	Jeff King; Kelly Hogan; McCollister, Matthew; Kevin Shinn
Subject:	Public Meetings
Date:	Thursday, August 24, 2017 12:03:02 PM
Attachments:	NBR CCPs Meetings flyer.pdf

Ladies and Gentlemen,

During the public scoping meetings for the CCPs of all the units of the National Bison Range Complex that we held in Kalispell and Polson the questions and discussion about the National Bison Range dominated the conversations, “eclipsing” (sort of speak) most discussions about the other units of the Complex.

Because of the stature of the National Bison Range in relation to the other units of the Complex, we believe that the same thing might happen during next week’s public scoping meeting in Missoula.

It is very important that we find a way to also obtain comments and address issues and questions from the public regarding the other units of the Complex (i.e., Lost Trail NWR, Ninepipe NWR, Pablo NWR, and the two Northwest Montana Wetland Management Districts in Lake and Sanders Counties).

Thus we are quickly organizing a less formal public meeting at the public library in Polson on Wednesday morning (August 30). The refuge staff has prepared a flyer (attached) to announce both public meetings locally, to try to reach out to as many local residents and neighbors of all the units of the Complex.

It is our hope that the meeting in Polson will allow us to obtain more comments and find out the issues that the public wants our agency to address on the CCP for the rest of the units of the Complex.

While we feel our meeting on Tuesday will be the best venue for you to provide us with your comments and bring up the issues you want us to address in the CCPs, you are more than welcome to join us in the Polson and Missoula meetings.

Thank you. Those of us in the Fish and Wildlife Service look forward to meeting with you on Tuesday, August 29 at the Ninepipes Lodge in Charlo.

Take care

--
Bernardo Garza
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From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Brian Upton; David Redhorse; Gale Decker; Jennifer Ekberg
Subject:	Re: Public Meetings
Date:	Thursday, August 24, 2017 12:07:44 PM
Attachments:	NBR CCPs Meetings flyer.pptx

I just noticed that the PDF version of the meetings flyer didn't turn out well, so I'm attaching here the PowerPoint version.

Thank you

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Bernardo Garza
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Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
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National Bison Range Refuge Complex
We Need To Hear From the Public!

se: Listen to public's ideas and issues related to the current and future manager
e National Bison Range, Ninepipe National Wildlife Refuge, Pablo National Wild
ge, Lost Trail National Wildlife Refuge, and 14 Waterfowl Production Areas (WP

For Questions Call: 406-644-2211, ext. 0 or visit www.fws.gov/refuge/National_Bison_Range

EN: August 30, 2017
ERE: North Lake County Public Library
DRESS: 2 1st Ave E, Polson, MT
IE: 9:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.
us: Ninepipe, Pablo, Lost Trail, WPAs

WHEN: August 30, 2017
WHERE: Public Library, Main Branch
ADDRESS: 301 East Main, Missoula, MT
TIME: 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Focus: All refuge Units

Suggested Topics For Public to Discuss

- Public Use Opportunities
- Wildlife Photography
- Nature Trails and Roads
- Day Use Area at National Bison Range
- Vacant Positions and Future Staffing
- Bird Watching Opportunities
- Education Programs for Students
- Bison Management and Genetics
- Elk, Pronghorn, and Deer Management
- Migratory Bird Management
- Bighorn Sheep Disease and Manageme
- Invasive Plant Species and Managemer
- Hunting and Fishing opportunities
- Historic Blasdel Barn (Blasdel WPA)

From: Redhorse, David
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: Public Meetings
Date: Thursday, August 24, 2017 12:11:38 PM

I was not aware of any planned public meetings; is the Tuesday meeting still focused on coordinating cooperating agencies?

On Thu, Aug 24, 2017 at 11:03 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Ladies and Gentlemen,
>
> During the public scoping meetings for the CCPs of all the units of the National Bison Range Complex that we held in Kalispell and Polson the questions and discussion about the National Bison Range dominated the conversations, “eclipsing” (sort of speak) most discussions about the other units of the Complex.
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> Because of the stature of the National Bison Range in relation to the other units of the Complex, we believe that the same thing might happen during next week’s public scoping meeting in Missoula.
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> It is very important that we find a way to also obtain comments and address issues and questions from the public regarding the other units of the Complex (i.e., Lost Trail NWR, Ninepipe NWR, Pablo NWR, and the two Northwest Montana Wetland Management Districts in Lake and Sanders Counties).
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> While we feel our meeting on Tuesday will be the best venue for you to provide us with your comments and bring up the issues you want us to address in the CCPs, you are more than welcome to join us in the Polson and Missoula meetings.

Thank you. Those of us in the Fish and Wildlife Service look forward to meeting with you on Tuesday, August 29 at the Ninepipes Lodge in Charlo.

Take care

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From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Redhorse, David
Subject: Re: Public Meetings
Date: Thursday, August 24, 2017 12:13:27 PM

Yes David. Tuesday's meeting is the meeting between the USFWS and the cooperating agencies. It is not a public meeting.

The two meetings on Wednesday (Polson in the morning and Missoula in the evening) are public meetings to scope for issues and comments.

On Thu, Aug 24, 2017 at 12:11 PM, Redhorse, David <david.redhorse@bia.gov> wrote:

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From: McCollister, Matthew
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: Public Meetings
Date: Thursday, August 24, 2017 12:22:10 PM

I originally thought that the Polson meeting was for our partners in the north part of the Complex (DNRC, FWP, etc).

On Thu, Aug 24, 2017 at 12:03 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Ladies and Gentlemen,
>
> During the public scoping meetings for the CCPs of all the units of the National Bison Range Complex that we held in Kalispell and Polson the questions and discussion about the National Bison Range dominated the conversations, “eclipsing” (sort of speak) most discussions about the other units of the Complex.
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--
Matthew McCollister
Wildlife Biologist
Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge
Lewistown, MT

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: McCollister, Matthew
Subject: Re: Public Meetings
Date: Thursday, August 24, 2017 12:22:55 PM

Yes. **But it has to be open to the public!**

On Thu, Aug 24, 2017 at 12:22 PM, McCollister, Matthew <matthew_mccollister@fws.gov> wrote:

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> --
> Matthew McCollister
> Wildlife Biologist
> Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge
> Lewistown, MT

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From: King, Laura
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: Meeting Flyer
Date: Thursday, August 24, 2017 12:41:05 PM

You are very welcome Bernardo. Have a good weekend!

Laura

Laura King, Refuge Program Specialist

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
National Bison Range
Moiese, MT 59824
phone, 406-644-2211, ext. 203
fax, 406-644-2661

Visit our website at http://www.fws.gov/refuge/national_bison_range/
AND check out the National Bison Range on Facebook!!

On Thu, Aug 24, 2017 at 8:51 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Yes, I certainly hope so.
>
> Thanks for all the hard work and all your help Laura.
>
> I'll inform BIA, Lake and Sanders Counties, and CSKT of the meeting in Polson as well.
>
> On Thu, Aug 24, 2017 at 8:33 AM, King, Laura <laura_king@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> > Ok Bernardo. Will do.
> >
> > Yes, then that is the issue. The Valley Journal's deadline for this weeks paper was last Friday. Like I said, I know the release of this announcement was out of your hands as well as Ryan's, which was unfortunate.
> >
> > Hopefully the flyers will make up for that a little.
> >
> > Laura
> >
> > ***Laura King, Refuge Program Specialist***

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
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AND check out the National Bison Range on Facebook!!

On Thu, Aug 24, 2017 at 8:23 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Looks very good Laura. Go ahead and distribute it.
>
> Ryan Moehring told me that on Monday he sent the press release to over 200 reporters (I forwarded you the email).
>
> On Thu, Aug 24, 2017 at 8:07 AM, King, Laura <laura_king@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> > See what you think of this revised flyer...
> >
> > If you give the green light we'll post it today.
> >
> > BTW, I checked our main local paper, the Valley Journal, and there isn't anything about the public meeting next Wedesday. This free paper only gets published once a week and won't come out again until next Wednesday. This is definitely a main conduit for sharing information in this valley. I know there is nothing you can do now but I wanted to let you know. I know there was a delay in releasing the news release for publication that was out of your control.
> >
> > Thanks,
> >
> >
> >
> >
> > Laura
> >
> > ***Laura King, Refuge Program Specialist***
> >
> > U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
> > National Bison Range
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AND check out the National Bison Range on Facebook!!

On Wed, Aug 23, 2017 at 3:46 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Hi Laura,
>
> Sorry I couldn't get back to you sooner with my comments on the great flyer you put together to announce next week's meetings.
>
> These are my comments:
>
> 1) I'd suggest we announce that the Polson meeting will begin at 9:30 instead of 8:30 - the reason is that the library opens at 10 am, but we'll be given access to the meeting room at 9:00. If people arrive by 8:30, or even by 9:00, we won't have time to set up the meeting room for the meeting.
>
> 2) we should specify that the Missoula meeting is in the main branch of the Public Library (apparently there are a few branches throughout Missoula, and we want to minimize confusion).
>
> 3) I might be wrong, but I believe that the name of the public library in Polson is "North Lake County Public Library". It might be good to point that out in the flyer, again, to avoid confusion.
>
> 4) I might suggest switching the "sides" of the two windows with the meeting details (i.e., the Polson meeting in the left side of the flyer, and the Missoula meeting in the right side of the flyer)
>
> Question:
>
> Do you think it might make sense or be a good idea to somehow mention that for the Polson meeting we are looking more for comments for Lost Trail, Pablo, Ninepipe, and the WMDs than for NBR? Just a thought...
>
> --
> **Bernardo Garza**
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SECTION 11 REVIEWING OTHER AGENCIES NEPA ACTIONS

11.1 REVIEWING AND COMMENTING ON EISs

The CEQ regulations (40 CFR1503.1) require that the lead agency for an EIS obtain comments from Federal agencies with jurisdiction by law or special expertise, and request comments from affected tribes and appropriate state and local agencies. Since the BIA has special expertise in matters affecting Indian tribes, and in some cases also has jurisdiction by law, other agencies frequently ask the BIA for comments on their EISs. In such cases, the BIA has the duty to comment. For bureaus within DOI, the BIA may comment directly to the agency. For agencies outside of DOI, comments must be submitted through DECRM for coordination by OEPC.

The best way for the BIA or a tribe to influence the decision making of another Federal agency is to become involved early in the EIS process. It is far more effective to participate in scoping and/or become a cooperating agency than to wait until the DEIS is written and then submit comments. Also, the BIA should establish working relationships with other Federal agencies wherein the BIA and potentially affected tribes are routinely consulted on proposed actions that may affect Indian tribes.

11.2 COOPERATING AGENCY

The lead agency may request another Federal agency to become a cooperating agency if they have "jurisdiction by law' or "special expertise with respect to any environmental issue" (40 CFR 1501.6). The BIA should be a cooperating agency if: (1) if the proposed action or an alternative is crossing trust lands and a BIA permit or approval is required; (2) resources on trust lands may be affected by an action; or (3) participation would allow the BIA to adopt or tier from the NEPA document (as would be the case with programmatic EISs). The BIA would not need to be a cooperating agency for proposed actions that are not affecting trust lands or resources. Cooperating agency status comes with responsibilities (40 CFR 1501.6(b)), and BIA staff should be aware of the commitment of time and resources that may be required.

When BIA is the lead agency it may also request other agencies and tribes participate as cooperating agencies (See Section 8.2.3). Certainly, the tribe on whose land the action is taking place should be invited as cooperating agency, and any other agencies that may have jurisdiction over a resource, such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or over adjacent lands that may be crossed by the project, such as the Bureau of Land Management or state lands.

11.3 PRE-DECISION REFERRALS TO CEQ

11.3.1 Introduction

The CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1504) establish a procedure through which a Federal agency that objects to the proposed action on environmental grounds may refer the matter to CEQ. In such situations, CEQ may take a range of actions including submitting the matter to the President.

From: Schmidt, Anna
To: Redhorse, David; bernardo_garza@fws.gov
Cc: Bodie Shaw; Dale Sebastian
Subject: Re: Public Meetings
Date: Thursday, August 24, 2017 2:16:54 PM
Attachments: BIA NEPA Guidebook Page 50 Section 11.2 Cooperating Agency.pdf

---

Thank you David for keeping me in the loop.

Mr. Bernardo - My position is the Wildlife Biologist at the NW Region BIA. I'm under the Forestry program, whereas David Redhorse leads the Natural Resource program. As you know, David will be attending the meeting Tuesday. Sadly, I won't be able to attend due to conflicting meetings. I also have let Dale Becker, of CSKT, know I won't be able to attend the meeting.

I wanted to introduce myself over email, and provide some feedback.

I work on ESA Section 7 consultations, and also forestry NEPA. Although this isn't a forestry action, I'm happy coordinate with the FWS on the Bison Range Compressive Conservation Plan's NEPA process.

I reviewed the proposed memo for our Regional Director's signature, and would like the below edited on page 1 and 2 to reflect the MOU's Purpose of Agreement (referenced below):

Concerning Agency Cooperation on the National Bison Range Comprehensive Conservation Plan's Environmental Impact Statement

The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) requests the federal, counties, and Native American tribal governments listed above to be Cooperating Agencies in the development of the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP)'s Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the National Bison Range (NBR).

Instead of/Not:

Concerning Agency Cooperation on the National Bison Range Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) requests the federal, counties, and Native American tribal governments listed above to be Cooperating Agencies in the development of the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the National Bison Range (NBR).

I. Purpose of Agreement

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to establish an agreement between the Service and the entities listed above regarding the roles and responsibilities of the agencies during the NEPA process. The Service will be the lead federal agency and the listed agencies will be Cooperating Agencies on the project.

As you know, a 'Cooperating Agency' is a specific term in NEPA (attached is a page from our BIA NEPA Guidebook for reference), and has certain responsibilities. I defer the actual CCP (the Plan) to FWS and the Tribe, since it is the FWS' Bison Range Refuge Management Plan for the next 15-years. We are happy to provide information, especially concerning BIA land and natural resource responsibilities associated with the Bison Range, through the NEPA process in which you can incorporate into your Plan.

Also to note, being a Cooperating Agency does take staff time, in which the BIA is limited on staff and financial resources. For future coordination, if we could have the option of calling in to a meeting, that would optimal since we are out of Portland. As well as plenty of time to review any NEPA documents, to assist with prioritizing our workload. I appreciate your consideration.

Thank you,

Anna

Anna Schmidt / Wildlife Biologist / Bureau of Indian Affairs / Northwest Region Office / 911 NE 11th Ave. Portland, OR 97232 / work: (503) 231-6808 / cell: (503) 729-0555 (call or text) / anna.schmidt@bia.gov



---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Garza, Bernardo** <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>
Date: Thu, Aug 24, 2017 at 11:13 AM
Subject: Re: Public Meetings

To: "Redhorse, David" <david.redhorse@bia.gov>

Yes David. Tuesday's meeting is the meeting between the USFWS and the cooperating agencies. It is not a public meeting.

The two meetings on Wednesday (Polson in the morning and Missoula in the evening) are public meetings to scope for issues and comments.

On Thu, Aug 24, 2017 at 12:11 PM, Redhorse, David <david.redhorse@bia.gov> wrote:

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From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Gale Decker
Subject:	Re: MOU NBR
Date:	Thursday, August 24, 2017 2:48:01 PM

Hello Gale,

Yes, during all the public scoping meetings we will be welcoming any comments for any of the units of the Complex, not only for the National Bison Range.

Regarding the MOU for NBR and not for the other units of the Complex, our agency is not required to enter into an MOU with other agencies when developing an environmental assessment in conjunction with a CCP. We are only required to enter into an MOU when we are developing an environmental impact statement.

Therefore, as far as the CCP/EA for the other units of the Complex, we can receive comments from and hold meetings with other agencies without requiring an MOU.

I'm hoping this answers your question.

Bernardo

On Thu, Aug 24, 2017 at 2:32 PM, Gale Decker <gdecker@lakemt.gov> wrote:

> Bernado,
>
> Lake County has received a copy of the draft MOU for Cooperator Status on the National Bison Range and the notice of the public meeting in Polson, MT. on August 30, 2017 to hear comments on the National Bison Range Refuge Complex scoping project. Our concern is that the draft MOU addresses cooperation on the National Bison Range Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement and seems to omit the other pieces of the complex. Our understanding is that the scoping will include the entire complex and would like that to be made clear in the MOU.
>
> Thanks,
>
> Gale Decker
>
> Lake County Commissioner

--
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From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Schmidt, Anna
Cc: Redhorse, David; Bodie Shaw; Dale Sebastian
Subject: Re: Public Meetings
Date: Thursday, August 24, 2017 2:53:00 PM

Anna,

Very glad to meet you. Thank you for your introduction and the information you provided in your email (BIA NEPA Guidance).

I'll review with other members of the FWS Planning Branch and the refuge complex staff the requests your forwarded to me and address them as soon as possible.

Bernardo

On Thu, Aug 24, 2017 at 2:16 PM, Schmidt, Anna <anna.schmidt@bia.gov> wrote:

> Thank you David for keeping me in the loop.
>
> Mr. Bernardo - My position is the Wildlife Biologist at the NW Region BIA. I'm under the Forestry program, whereas David Redhorse leads the Natural Resource program. As you know, David will be attending the meeting Tuesday. Sadly, I won't be able to attend due to conflicting meetings. I also have let Dale Becker, of CSKT, know I won't be able to attend the meeting.
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Thank you,

Anna

Anna Schmidt / Wildlife Biologist / Bureau of Indian Affairs / Northwest Region Office / 911 NE 11th Ave. Portland, OR 97232 / work: (503) 231-6808 / cell: (503) 729-0555 (call or text) / anna.schmidt@bia.gov

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From: **Garza, Bernardo** <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>
Date: Thu, Aug 24, 2017 at 11:13 AM
Subject: Re: Public Meetings
To: "Redhorse, David" <david.redhorse@bia.gov>

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Thank you. Those of us in the Fish and Wildlife Service look forward to meeting with you on Tuesday, August 29 at the Ninepipes Lodge in Charlo.

Take care

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Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

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From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Jeff King; Kevin Shinn; Kelly Hogan; McCollister, Matthew
Bcc:	Laura King
Subject:	Fwd: Public Meetings
Date:	Thursday, August 24, 2017 2:54:13 PM

FYI

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Garza, Bernardo** <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>
Date: Thu, Aug 24, 2017 at 2:53 PM
Subject: Re: Public Meetings
To: "Schmidt, Anna" <anna.schmidt@bia.gov>
Cc: "Redhorse, David" <david.redhorse@bia.gov>, Bodie Shaw <bodie.shaw@bia.gov>, Dale Sebastian <dale.sebastian@bia.gov>

Anna,

Very glad to meet you. Thank you for your introduction and the information you provided in your email (BIA NEPA Guidance).

I'll review with other members of the FWS Planning Branch and the refuge complex staff the requests your forwarded to me and address them as soon as possible.

Bernardo

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>
> Concerning Agency Cooperation on
> the National Bison Range
> Comprehensive Conservation

Plan's Environmental Impact Statement

The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) requests the federal, counties, and Native American tribal governments listed above to be Cooperating Agencies in the development of the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP)'s Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the National Bison Range (NBR).

Instead of/Not:

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From: Schmidt, Anna
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: Public Meetings
Date: Thursday, August 24, 2017 3:13:14 PM

Thank you.

Anna Schmidt / Wildlife Biologist / Bureau of Indian Affairs / Northwest Region Office / 911 NE 11th Ave. Portland, OR 97232 / work: (503) 231-6808 / cell: (503) 729-0555 (call or text) / anna.schmidt@bia.gov

Journal of Mammalogy Volume 98, Issue 1, 8 February 2017

Special Collection: Lethal Control of Predators - Coexisting with Carnivores:

https://academic.oup.com/jmammal/pages/lethal_control_predators

On Thu, Aug 24, 2017 at 1:53 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

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From:	Danno, Mary
To:	Garza, Bernardo; Kelly Hogan
Subject:	Meeting Minutes - NBR CCP Cooperating Agencies Meeting - Ninepipes Lodge - August 29, 2017
Date:	Tuesday, September 5, 2017 6:15:15 PM
Attachments:	National Bison Range Complex CCP Cooperating Agencies Meeting.docx

---

Hello and here you go.....

Mary Danno

Visitor Services Manager
Visitor Services and Outreach
Region 6, National Wildlife Refuge System
303-236-4451 - new phone #

(Lieu: Fridays)

EVS Website: https://inside.fws.gov/index.cfm/go/post/Division-of-Education-and-Visitor-Services-Home

National Bison Range Complex CCP Cooperating Agencies Meeting @ Ninepipes Lodge - August 29, 2017

Bernardo reviewed the CCP Process, its congressional foundation, and purpose. He gave a review of the 1997 Refuge Improvement Act, identifying the six priority public uses - - emphasizing that CCP's help provide continuity of management.

Bernardo presented the steps in the CCP planning process and the side bars of a CCP. Schedule and milestones:

Planning Process/Scoping	October 2017
Alternatives Development	March 2018
Development of Draft CCP/EIS/EA	March 2019
Development of Final CCP/EIS	May 2020

The planning team includes the core planning team and the extended planning team.

Two CCPs:	Bison Range	CCP & EIS
	Other units	CCP & EA

The processes will be concurrent until the development of vision and goals. No MOU is needed for an EA process; however, the cooperating agencies are welcome to provide input.

Jeff King provided history of the NBR – established in 1908 by Teddy Roosevelt for the purpose of preserving the Plains Bison. Two additional establishment orders are for the preservation grassland nesting birds, and a permanent Bison herd. 2/3 of NBR is in Sanders County; 1/3 in Lake County.

Primary management issue is the management of the Bison herd of around 350-400 animals. High boundary fence keeps the Bison within the Refuge. The annual Bison roundup maintains the carrying capacity of ~350 animals. The annual roundup is open to the public and serves as an excellent outreach opportunity – especially for local school groups - - with 1200 school students attending each year. The NBR Bison are a 'conservation' herd; managed for genetic diversity. Only 3% of the nation's 250,000 bison are managed as conservation herds.

Qualities of NBR:

- Open space – lack of development
- Historical value – what it represents
- Research opportunities for universities
- 'snap shot' of Montana wildlife
- Picnic Area – gathering of families
- Scenic/photographic opportunities
- Environmental education opportunities

- Fishing opportunities
- Cultural heritage
- Intact maintained ecosystems
- Management of Plains bison
- Simplicity of usability for public = opportunity
- Proximity to corridor to Glacier NP
- Fascination with U.S. Western history and wilderness for foreign visitors

Opportunities at NBR:

- Coordination with surrounding lands for management
- Identify management priorities – how NBR can fill a gap
- Identify stakeholders
- Public support to maintain unique facilities (ie, Picnic Area)
- For the agency to integrate objectives from Native American policy into FWS activities
- Maintain priorities and mandate, but also define carrying capacity for public use
- Nominate Wildlife drive (Red Sleep Mountain Drive) as a scenic highway – funding opportunity
- Highlight priorities/qualities to get funding
- Review and expand Visitor Services and facilities
- Community-based approach to invasive species, etc.
- Knowledge-sharing with neighbors

Issues to address in CCP:

- Invasive species – existing + two new ones (milfoil & rush skeleton)
- NBR is most invasive-free land in Lake County
- Finding balance between natural resources and visitors to NBR – 2M drive Hwy 93 annually
- Take a 'landscape' approach to invasives, etc. – Neighborhood Management Plan
- Wildlife and domestic animals (cattle) co-mingling which spreads diseases
- Define/improve Refuge staff to manage resources and public-use opportunities
- Air quality & Climate
- Visitation projections
- Ensure plan monitoring and mitigation = adaptive management
- Expansion of wildlife opportunities – acquisition of adjacent lands through cooperation
- To maintain and improve what we have and is valuable - - invasive species need to be tackled and monitored
- The CCP is an opportunity to think about what Visitor Service experience do we want visitors to have - - messaging to draw them in. What are the different messages to reach varying visitors?
- Weed mitigation on tour road: Wash station? Mass transit?
- Better understanding of commercial filming and drones
- Coordination of multi-agency wildlife surveys
- Coordination of multi-agency weed management

- Staffing levels at NBR are lacking
- Coordination nowadays is more reactive, rather than proactive
- Need to prioritize issues and make sure CCP focuses on preemptive efforts
- Ensure visitor safety – difficult with low staffing levels
- Develop a Friends Group
- Opportunity for a land swap with the tribe for certain acreage
- Opportunity to revisit wildlife management strategies
- Opportunity to develop a step-down plan for wildlife management

What's NOT in the EIS?

An AFA. An AFA is too wide and variable to be analyzed within a CCP.

Recognition of AFA history is important to the tribe and the counties.

Memorandum of Understanding:

- Standard format our region uses
- Establishes the relationship and roles that each cooperating agency will play
- Also reached out to State agencies, BOR, USFS, and other tribes
- CSKT: Add "Fisheries"
- Sanders and Lake Counties:
    - represented by the 'county' – not the 'commissioners'
    - Make the 'contribution' list match that of the CSKT list of contributions
    - Add: Issue of Alternatives and Mitigations
    - The counties want to 'play' and 'play by the rules'
- BIA: wants to be a major participant (Core Planning Team), but they don't have the personnel to attend all the meetings; focus will be on major discussions.
- Comments/Changes to be made on the MOU will be done by Bernardo; then, he'll send it by certified mail to all parties for signature.

From: Hogan, Kelly
To: Bernardo Garza
Subject: Fwd: Google Alert - national bison range
Date: Wednesday, September 6, 2017 6:09:09 AM

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Google Alerts** <googlealerts-noreply@google.com>
Date: Tue, Sep 5, 2017 at 10:16 PM
Subject: Google Alert - national bison range
To: kelly_hogan@fws.gov



national bison range

As-it-happens update · September 6, 2017

NEWS

Comment period extended for **Bison Range**

Valleyjournal

POLSON – The public comment period for a new comprehensive conservation plan for the **National Bison Range**, Ninepipe Wildlife Refuge and other ...

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Send Feedback

From: King, Jeff
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: NBR CCP coop agreement
Date: Thursday, September 7, 2017 3:54:02 PM

Bernardo,

I spoke with Jim Williams, Regional Supervisor with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks today. He would like to take a look at the agreement. Can you provide me with the final version that the other cooperators signed? I will forward that to Jim for his review.

Good to see you yesterday.

Thanks,

jk

Jeff King, Project Leader
National Bison Range Complex
58355 Bison Range Road
Moiese, MT 59824
(406) 644-2211, ext. 204

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between the

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Fish and Wildlife Service
Bureau of Indian Affairs – Northwest Region

CONFEDERATED SALISH & KOOTENAI TRIBES

LAKE COUNTY
Via Lake County Board of Commissioners
A political subdivision of the State of Montana

SANDERS COUNTY
Via Sanders County Board of Commissioners
A political subdivision of the State of Montana

Concerning
Agency Cooperation on the National Bison Range
Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

I. Introduction

The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) requests the federal, county, and Native American tribal governments listed above to be Cooperating Agencies in the development of the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the National Bison Range (NBR). The planning area for this CCP is the congressionally-designated NBR boundary located within the Flathead Indian Reservation in the Mission Valley, Lake and Sanders Counties, Montana.

The CCP/EIS process must comply with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) 42 U.S.C. Sec. 4321 and all subsequent regulations implementing NEPA (see Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)) regulations, 40 CFR Part 1500-1508, Department of the Interior (DOI) regulations 43 CFR part 46 and requirements listed in Departmental Manual 516 "Environmental Quality"). In addition, the Service is guided by the Fish and Wildlife Service Manual (602 FW3) on Comprehensive Conservation Planning. The Service also considered the CEQ *Memorandum for the Heads of Federal Agencies, Subject: Cooperating Agencies in Implementing the Procedural Requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act,* January 30, 2002 and the CEQ *Memorandum for Heads of Federal Agencies, Subject: Designation of Non-Federal Agencies to be Cooperating Agencies in Implementing the Procedural Requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act,* July 28, 1999, Executive Order 13352, August 26, 2004, Facilitation of Cooperative Conservation, and other CEQ, DOI, and Service guidance.

II. Purpose of Agreement

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to establish an agreement between the Service and the entities listed above regarding the roles and responsibilities of the agencies during the NEPA process. The Service will be the lead federal Agency and the listed agencies will be Cooperating Agencies on the project.

III. Justification and Roles of Cooperating Agencies

A. Justification for Cooperating Agency Status

1. Each Agency has been appointed as a Cooperating Agency because they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- the Agency has jurisdiction by law of resources within the NBR
- the Agency has specific areas of expertise/knowledge needed for completion of the CCP/EIS

2. Each Cooperating Agency agrees to provide information or data within their area(s) of expertise, attend planning team meetings, and review and comment on documents. Cooperating Agency status comes with an expectation that the Cooperating Agency will bring resources to the table to facilitate the timely completion of the NEPA process. Cooperating agencies may also help prepare or submit alternatives or mitigation measures to be considered in the process.

3. Nothing in this MOU shall obligate the Cooperating Agencies to expend appropriations or to enter into any contract or other obligation. Specific work projects or activities that involve the transfer of fund, service, or property between the parties to this MOU will require the execution of separate agreements or contracts, contingent upon the availability of funds as appropriated by Congress. Each subsequent agreement or arrangement involving the transfer of funds, services, or property shall be made in writing

and shall be independently authorized by appropriate statutory authority and regulations, including those applicable to procurement activities.

4. The Cooperating Agencies agree to assist the Service in providing accurate information to the public (43 CFR 46.225 (a) – (d)). The CCP/EIS planning process for the NBR is intended to be transparent with all agencies, organizations, stakeholder groups and the general public. The Service regularly provides information about its planning process through planning updates, press releases, briefings, hard copies of documents, and posting documents on the Service's website. All information presented to the public must be approved for publication by the Service. The Service recognizes that other Federal agencies, county representatives, and Native American tribal government representatives must adhere to their public disclosure laws as necessary; however, releases of predecisional information (including working drafts) in a manner that purposely undermines or circumvents the spirit of this MOU, which is to develop a framework to work cooperatively in developing the CCP/EIS, or consistently misrepresents the planning process may be grounds to terminate the Cooperating Agency status. When information is received, the Service cannot agree to maintain confidentiality of this information except to the extent that is permitted under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and the Privacy Act of 1974.

B. Cooperating Agencies

Bureau of Indian Affairs, Northwest Region (BIANR)

- The Service provides an opportunity for other Federal agencies to serve on planning teams (Planning Policy, Fish and Wildlife Service Manual 602 FW3).
- BIANR has information and expertise that will assist the Service in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:
    - Federal government relationships with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and other Native American tribal governments
    - Tribal lands irrigation facilities management and expertise
- BIANR will provide representatives to serve on the planning team.

Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes (CSKT)

- The Service provides an opportunity for Tribal Governments agencies to serve on planning teams (Planning Policy, Fish and Wildlife Service Manual 602 FW3).
- CSKT has information and expertise that will assist the Service in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:
    - Cultural resources management and conservation
    - Biological information on wildlife and habitat conditions
    - Fire management expertise
    - Socioeconomic conditions and trends in the planning area
    - Transportation
    - Land Use Information and Plans
    - Noxious or invasive weeds and invasive aquatic species
    - Tourism and visitor services
    - Public health issues

- Emergency management and response
- Law enforcement assistance and expertise
- Fisheries

- CSKT shall assign representatives and designated alternates to speak on behalf of the Tribal Government. It is the responsibility of the assigned representatives to keep the CSKT Chairman and other Tribal Government officials briefed on the key developments of the CCP/EIS. To ensure consistency in communications, the same representatives shall serve for the duration of the project if at all possible. On occasion and as necessary and appropriate, other CSKT members may be briefed on key developments in the planning process.

LAKE AND SANDERS COUNTIES (Counties)

Lake County Board of Commissioners
Sanders County Board of Commissioners

- The Counties and their agencies have information and expertise (Executive Order 13352) that will assist in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:
  - Cultural resources, custom heritage and history
  - Biological information on wildlife, flora, fauna and habitat conditions
  - Fisheries
  - Fire management expertise
  - Socioeconomic conditions and trends in the planning area
  - Transportation
  - Land Use Information and Plans
  - Noxious or invasive weeds and invasive aquatic species
  - Tourism and visitor services
  - Public health issues
  - Emergency management and response
  - Law enforcement assistance and expertise
  - Resource utilization at or adjacent to the premises
- The Counties shall assign representatives and designated alternates to speak on behalf of the Counties. It is the responsibility of the assigned representatives to keep the Board of County Commissioners for the Counties briefed on the key developments of the CCP/EIS. To ensure consistency in communications, the same representatives shall serve for the duration of the project if at all possible. On occasion and as necessary and appropriate, other County Commissioners may be briefed on key developments in the planning process.

C. Roles and Responsibilities

1. The agencies listed above understand that their Cooperating Agency status does not confer to them any special authority to change, edit, or veto all or part of the CCP or EIS.

2. In cases where a Cooperating Agency provides information it considers confidential, the Service will work with a Cooperating Agency to present the information in a manner that protects the rights of the Cooperating Agency before sharing the information necessary for the environmental analysis with the other

Cooperating Agencies. The release of Service information to a Federal, Tribal, State or local Agency that includes proprietary or confidential information must be reviewed under FOIA and adhere to statutory and regulatory authorities. The parties to this MOU will have access to all information necessary for their Cooperating Agency participation in the environmental analysis to the extent permitted by applicable law. The parties agree not to release pre-decisional information (including working drafts) in a manner that undermines the Service's intent to provide accurate information to the public about its planning process as described under III. A. 4. When any of the Cooperating Agencies in this MOU must disclose information under their disclosure laws, the Service requests notification of any public disclosure of CCP/EIS documents made by an Agency to this agreement (43 CFR 46.225 (d)).

3. The Service possesses sole authority to direct the actions of its Contractors.

4. The Service is responsible for making all substantive decisions involving the CCP/EIS and is the final decision maker for disputes that may arise in the process. The Cooperating Agencies agree that, once such disputes are resolved, they will not be revisited. However, the Cooperating Agencies retain the right to comment on all issues related to the CCP/EIS, including those in dispute, through the normal NEPA process.

5. Veto or decision-making power does not accompany Cooperating Agency status. As the lead Agency charged with carrying out the NEPA process under Section 102(2) (c) of NEPA, the Service retains sole decision-making authority over the CCP/EIS and its process.

6. The Service or Cooperating Agencies may terminate this agreement by providing written notice of the termination to the other parties.

IV. Authority

This memorandum is entered into under the following laws, authorities and regulations:

A. National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, PL 91-190, 42 U.S.C. 4321

B. Council of Environmental Quality NEPA Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508)

C. National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended (16USC 668dd et seq.) The act formally defines the mission of the Refuge System as the administration of *"a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitat within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans" (16 USC 668dd(a)(2)).*

V. Process and Procedure

1. The Service is the lead Agency for ensuring full compliance of the CCP and EIS with the requirements of NEPA. Under applicable laws, rules, regulations, orders, and policies, the Service shall ensure that all necessary consultation and consideration is performed with all Federal, State, Tribal, and local governments and private organizations.

2. The Service will coordinate and consult with the Cooperating Agencies throughout the preparation of the CCP/EIS, particularly during the scoping and the Draft CCP/EIS development and impact analysis. This consultation is to assess alternatives accurately; identify areas that require clarification; and to avoid, mitigate, or otherwise address impacts to the natural environment.

3. The Service has full responsibility for implementing procedures and regulations including, but not limited to, public review of the CCP/EIS, public distribution of the CCP/EIS, and required decision documentation.

4. The Service will arrange, announce, and conduct scoping meetings and will analyze the results.

5. The Service will meet with the Cooperating Agencies at least once during each strategic phase of the planning process (Scoping, Alternatives, Draft CCP/EIS, and Final CCP/EIS) and more often if needed. All Cooperating Agencies may participate in discussions on the proposed action and on special or critical resource needs related to the plan. The Service will provide the Cooperating Agencies with opportunities to opportunities to submit alternatives and mitigation measures, and to review and comment on all of these and the preliminary Draft and Final CCP/EIS. The Cooperating Agencies will provide comments to the Service within the overall time schedule.

6. The Service will provide copies of correspondence to the Cooperating Agencies as it applies to their area(s) of expertise, and the development of alternatives and the plan.

7. Through consultation with the Cooperating Agencies, the Service is responsible for selection of the Preferred Alternative and preparation of the Record of Decision. The Service's Regional Director for Region 6, Mountain-Prairie Region is the final decision maker for the Record of Decision.

8. The primary designated points of contacts for the Service shall be the NBR Complex Project Leader, Jeff King, and Planning Team Co-Leaders, Bernardo Garza and Toni Griffin (Region 6, Mountain-Prairie Region, Division of People, Policy and Planning, Branch of Policy and Planning, Lakewood, Colorado). Other NBR Complex staff and personnel from the Service's Region 6 may also serve on the planning team.

9. Each Cooperating Agency shall designate representatives to serve on the planning team. If the designated representative(s) is not able to fulfill the duties, the Cooperating Agency shall designate a new representative in writing to the Service. Given the three-year planning schedule, those contacts are not specifically identified in this MOU, but will be documented in Memorandum to the Files by the Planning Team Leaders of all planning team members and updated as necessary. In order to ensure the consistency in communications, the designated representatives should make every effort to attend planning team meetings over the length of the planning process.

10. The Cooperating Agencies shall provide responses to data requests and provide review comments to the Service within the overall planning schedule.

11. The Service will document all meetings, emails, and phone conversations for inclusion in the Administrative Record for the CCP/EIS. The Service will maintain the official Administrative Record.

12. The Service will have primary responsibility for writing and rewriting all sections, parts, or chapters of the CCP/EIS and for reestablishing a schedule for completion of chapters consistent with the overall planning schedule. As appropriate, Cooperating Agencies may also help accomplish the same.

13. The Service will be the recipient of all comments on the CCP/EIS resulting from the review and comment periods.

13. Upon revision of the Draft CCP/EIS, the Service will provide the Cooperating Agencies with a list of the significant changes in the Final CCP/EIS.

VII. Administration

1. Modifications to this MOU may be proposed by the Service or by the Cooperating Agencies and shall become effective upon the written approval of all parties. Changes to this MOU must be initialed and dated on each replacement page by an authorized agent of each party.

2. Any party may withdraw from this MOU after 30 days written notice of their intention to do so to the other parties.

3. Nothing in this agreement will be construed as limiting or affecting in any way the authority or responsibility of the Service or the Cooperating Agencies to perform within their authority.

4. This MOU is not intended to create, nor shall this MOU be construed or interpreted as creating, a binding or legally enforceable contract among the parties. The sole remedy for the failure of a party to fully comply with the provisions of this MOU shall be termination hereof.

This MOU will become effective upon the signature of all of its participants.

Approved

_____ _____
Jeff King, Project Leader, Date
National Bison Range Complex

_____ _____
Regional Director: Date
Bureau of Indian Affairs – Northwest Region

_____ _____
Chairman: Date
Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes

_____ _____
Chairperson Date
Lake County Board of Commissioners
A political subdivision of the State of Montana

_____ _____
Presiding Officer Date
Sanders County Board of Commissioners
A political subdivision of the State of Montana

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Jennifer Ekberg; Gale Decker; David Redhorse; Brian Upton; Jeff King
Cc:	Kelly Hogan; Bernie Petersen
Subject:	NBR CCP/EIS Cooperating Agencies MOU
Date:	Friday, September 8, 2017 12:06:48 PM
Attachments:	NBR CCP and EIS Cooperating Agencies MOU.pdf

Dear Cooperators,

First of all I want to thank all of you for your agency's participation in the Cooperating Agencies meeting we had at the Ninepipes Lodge in Charlo on August 29.

Those of us from the Service feel that the meeting was a very successful first meeting for our agencies and a great opportunity to get to know each other better.

I am attaching to this email message an updated MOU for your review. The MOU was edited based on comments from Lake County.

After your review please let me know if the agency you represent is ready to sign the MOU or if you have further comments.

Thank you

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: King, Jeff
To: Williams, James
Cc: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: NBR CCP MOU
Date: Tuesday, September 12, 2017 10:50:06 AM

Jim,

I just realized that the copy of the MOU that I sent you didn't have MFWP included. I'm cc:ing Bernardo Garza FWS planner and he can give further directions.

Thanks again.

Thanks,

jk

Jeff King, Project Leader
National Bison Range Complex
58355 Bison Range Road
Moiese, MT 59824
(406) 644-2211, ext. 204

On Tue, Sep 12, 2017 at 10:07 AM, Jeff King <jeff_king@fws.gov> wrote:

> Jim. Very good news. If you can get the signed MOU back to me I will forward to the regional office.
>
> Thanks
>
> jk
>
> Sent from my iPhone
>
> On Sep 11, 2017, at 4:59 PM, Williams, James <jiwilliams@mt.gov> wrote:
>
> > Neil Anderson will be on your team Jeff and help as needed.
> >
> > Jim
> >
> > **From:** King, Jeff [mailto:jeff_king@fws.gov]

Sent: Friday, September 8, 2017 11:55 AM
To: Williams, James <jiwilliams@mt.gov>
Subject: NBR CCP MOU

Jim,

It was good catching up yesterday.

I've attached a copy of the MOU for the National Bison Range Comprehensive Conservation Plan EIS. I look forward to your review and hope that Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks can participate in this important planning process.

Thanks,

jk

Jeff King, Project Leader

National Bison Range Complex

58355 Bison Range Road

Moiese, MT 59824

(406) 644-2211, ext. 204

From: Williams, James
To: King, Jeff; bernardo_garza@fws.gov
Subject: RE: NBR CCP MOU
Date: Tuesday, September 12, 2017 10:53:01 AM

Thanks. Put Neil Anderson – FWP Regional Wildlife Program Manager, on the signature line.

JW

From: King, Jeff [mailto:jeff_king@fws.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, September 12, 2017 10:50 AM
To: Williams, James <jiwilliams@mt.gov>
Cc: Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>
Subject: Re: NBR CCP MOU

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> **Subject:** NBR CCP MOU
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> jk
>
> ***Jeff King, Project Leader***
> National Bison Range Complex
> 58355 Bison Range Road
> Moiese, MT 59824
> (406) 644-2211, ext. 204

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Will Meeks
Bcc: Kelly Hogan
Subject: Re: FW: I know you"ve sent these already, but . . . .
Date: Tuesday, September 12, 2017 1:22:41 PM

Schedule Milestones	
TASK	**Target Completion Date**
Preplanning and Scoping - Publish Notice of Intent (Est. week of May 8, 2017) - Invitation to State, Tribes, and Cooperating Agencies - Kickoff meeting with Cooperating Agencies (Week of June 5, 2017) - Work Plan - Public Involvement Plan - Scoping Meetings - Scoping Report - Vision and Goals Workshop	October 1, 2017
Alternatives Development - Alternatives Development Workshops - Public Input on Draft Alternatives - Briefing Statements to Regional and National Directorate	March 1, 2018
Development of Draft CCP/EIS/EA - Objectives and Strategies Development Workshop - Environmental Analysis - Internal Review Draft CCP/EIS/EA - Meet with Cooperating Agencies; respond to comments - Notice of Availability; briefing statements - Public Review of Draft CCP/EIS/EA - Public Meetings	March 1, 2019
Development of Final CCP/EIS	May 1, 2020

- Respond to Public Comments - Internal Review Final CCP/EIS - Notice of Availability; briefing statements - Publication of Final CCP/EIS; 30-day waiting period - Draft Record of Decision - Final Record of Decision - Notice of Availability of ROD - Printing of Final stand-alone CCPs - Completion of Administrative Record	

Planning Team:

Refuge: Jeff King and most of his staff

Branch of Planning: Kelly Hogan, Matthew McCollister, Toni Griffin, Bernardo Garza

Cooperating Agencies: Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes, Lake County, Sanders County, and BIA - Northwest Regional Office (there is a possibility that Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks will also join the planning team as a cooperating agency).

If you need the specific names of the NBRC staff and of the representatives of the cooperating agencies just let me know.

Bernardo

On Tue, Sep 12, 2017 at 1:07 PM, Will Meeks <will_meeks@fws.gov> wrote:

> Bernardo,
>
> I'm not sure if Kelly is around our not. Please see below. Do you have those available to send me? Thanks.
>
> Will Meeks
>
> U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
>
> Mountain-Prairie Region

Assistant Regional Director

National Wildlife Refuge System

303-236-4303 (office)

720-541-0310 (cell)

From: Will Meeks [mailto:will_meeks@fws.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, September 12, 2017 8:52 AM
To: Kelly Hogan <kelly_hogan@fws.gov>
Subject: I know you've sent these already, but . . . .

Can you send me the NBR CCP proposed timeline and the planning team make-up?
Thanks.

Will Meeks

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Mountain-Prairie Region

Assistant Regional Director

National Wildlife Refuge System

303-236-4303 (office)

720-541-0310 (cell)

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	King, Jeff
Cc:	Williams, James
Subject:	Re: NBR CCP MOU
Date:	Tuesday, September 12, 2017 1:26:06 PM

Hello Jim and Jeff,

I'll gladly make the necessary changes to the MOU so it can be signed. But I need to know the name and title of the MTFWP person that will sign the MOU.

Thanks,

Bernardo

On Tue, Sep 12, 2017 at 10:49 AM, King, Jeff <jeff_king@fws.gov> wrote:

> Jim,
>
> I just realized that the copy of the MOU that I sent you didn't have MFWP included. I'm cc:ing Bernardo Garza FWS planner and he can give further directions.
>
> Thanks again.
>
> Thanks,
>
> jk
>
> ***Jeff King, Project Leader***
> National Bison Range Complex
> 58355 Bison Range Road
> Moiese, MT 59824
> (406) 644-2211, ext. 204
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Neil Anderson will be on your team Jeff and help as needed.

Jim

From: King, Jeff [mailto:jeff_king@fws.gov]
Sent: Friday, September 8, 2017 11:55 AM
To: Williams, James <jiwilliams@mt.gov>
Subject: NBR CCP MOU

Jim,

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Thanks,

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Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Williams, James
Cc: King, Jeff
Subject: Re: NBR CCP MOU
Date: Tuesday, September 12, 2017 1:27:43 PM

Jim and Jeff,

I just realized that you had answered the question I asked in my previous email.

Sorry.

I'll prepare the MOU for MTFWP signature, and will email the PDF to you.

Once it is signed, Jeff will need to get a hold of it to sign it and pass it on to the next signatory.

Thanks

Bernardo

On Tue, Sep 12, 2017 at 10:52 AM, Williams, James <jiwilliams@mt.gov> wrote:

> Thanks. Put Neil Anderson – FWP Regional Wildlife Program Manager, on the signature line.
>
> JW
>
> **From:** King, Jeff [mailto:jeff_king@fws.gov]
> **Sent:** Tuesday, September 12, 2017 10:50 AM
> **To:** Williams, James <jiwilliams@mt.gov>
> **Cc:** Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>
> **Subject:** Re: NBR CCP MOU
>
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--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between the

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Fish and Wildlife Service
Bureau of Indian Affairs – Northwest Region

CONFEDERATED SALISH & KOOTENAI TRIBES

STATE OF MONTANA
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

LAKE COUNTY
Via Lake County Board of Commissioners
A political subdivision of the State of Montana

SANDERS COUNTY
Via Sanders County Board of Commissioners
A political subdivision of the State of Montana

Concerning
Agency Cooperation on the National Bison Range
Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

I. Introduction

The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) requests the federal, state, county, and Native American tribal governments listed above to be Cooperating Agencies in the development of the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the National Bison Range (NBR). The planning area for this CCP is the congressionally-designated NBR boundary located within the Flathead Indian Reservation in the Mission Valley, Lake and Sanders Counties, Montana.

The CCP/EIS process must comply with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) 42 U.S.C. Sec. 4321 and all subsequent regulations implementing NEPA (see Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)) regulations, 40 CFR Part 1500-1508, Department of the Interior (DOI) regulations 43 CFR part 46 and requirements listed in Departmental Manual 516 "Environmental Quality"). In addition, the Service is guided by the Fish and Wildlife Service Manual (602 FW3) on Comprehensive Conservation Planning. The Service also considered the CEQ *Memorandum for the Heads of Federal Agencies, Subject: Cooperating Agencies in Implementing the Procedural Requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act,* January 30, 2002 and the CEQ *Memorandum for Heads of Federal Agencies, Subject: Designation of Non-Federal Agencies to be Cooperating Agencies in Implementing the Procedural Requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act,* July 28, 1999, Executive Order 13352, August 26, 2004, Facilitation of Cooperative Conservation, and other CEQ, DOI, and Service guidance.

II. Purpose of Agreement

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to establish an agreement between the Service and the entities listed above regarding the roles and responsibilities of the agencies during the NEPA process. The Service will be the lead federal Agency and the listed agencies will be Cooperating Agencies on the project.

III. Justification and Roles of Cooperating Agencies

A. Justification for Cooperating Agency Status

1. Each Agency has been appointed as a Cooperating Agency because they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- the Agency has jurisdiction by law of resources within the NBR
- the Agency has specific areas of expertise/knowledge needed for completion of the CCP/EIS

2. Each Cooperating Agency agrees to provide information or data within their area(s) of expertise, attend planning team meetings, and review and comment on documents. Cooperating Agency status comes with an expectation that the Cooperating Agency will bring resources to the table to facilitate the timely completion of the NEPA process. Cooperating agencies may also help prepare or submit alternatives or mitigation measures to be considered in the process.

3. Nothing in this MOU shall obligate the Cooperating Agencies to expend appropriations or to enter into any contract or other obligation. Specific work projects or activities that involve the transfer of fund, service, or property between the parties to this MOU will require the execution of separate agreements or contracts, contingent upon the availability of funds as appropriated by Congress. Each subsequent agreement or arrangement involving the transfer of funds, services, or property shall be made in writing

and shall be independently authorized by appropriate statutory authority and regulations, including those applicable to procurement activities.

4. The Cooperating Agencies agree to assist the Service in providing accurate information to the public (43 CFR 46.225 (a) – (d)). The CCP/EIS planning process for the NBR is intended to be transparent with all agencies, organizations, stakeholder groups and the general public. The Service regularly provides information about its planning process through planning updates, press releases, briefings, hard copies of documents, and posting documents on the Service's website. All information presented to the public must be approved for publication by the Service. The Service recognizes that other Federal agencies, county representatives, and Native American tribal government representatives must adhere to their public disclosure laws as necessary; however, releases of predecisional information (including working drafts) in a manner that purposely undermines or circumvents the spirit of this MOU, which is to develop a framework to work cooperatively in developing the CCP/EIS, or consistently misrepresents the planning process may be grounds to terminate the Cooperating Agency status. When information is received, the Service cannot agree to maintain confidentiality of this information except to the extent that is permitted under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and the Privacy Act of 1974.

B. Cooperating Agencies

Bureau of Indian Affairs, Northwest Region (BIANR)

- The Service provides an opportunity for other Federal agencies to serve on planning teams (Planning Policy, Fish and Wildlife Service Manual 602 FW3).
- BIANR has information and expertise that will assist the Service in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:
    - Federal government relationships with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and other Native American tribal governments
    - Tribal lands irrigation facilities management and expertise
- BIANR will provide representatives to serve on the planning team.

Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes (CSKT)

- The Service provides an opportunity for Tribal Governments agencies to serve on planning teams (Planning Policy, Fish and Wildlife Service Manual 602 FW3).
- CSKT has information and expertise that will assist the Service in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:
    - Cultural resources management and conservation
    - Biological information on wildlife and habitat conditions
    - Fire management expertise
    - Socioeconomic conditions and trends in the planning area
    - Transportation
    - Land Use Information and Plans
    - Noxious or invasive weeds and invasive aquatic species
    - Tourism and visitor services

- Public health issues
- Emergency management and response
- Law enforcement assistance and expertise
- Fisheries

- CSKT shall assign representatives and designated alternates to speak on behalf of the Tribal Government. It is the responsibility of the assigned representatives to keep the CSKT Chairman and other Tribal Government officials briefed on the key developments of the CCP/EIS. To ensure consistency in communications, the same representatives shall serve for the duration of the project if at all possible. On occasion and as necessary and appropriate, other CSKT members may be briefed on key developments in the planning process.

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MTFWP)

- The Service provides an opportunity for State conservation agencies that have a direct land management relationship with the refuge, the opportunity to serve on planning teams (Planning Policy, Fish and Wildlife Service Manual 602 FW3). The Service and MTFWP work cooperatively on many issues pertaining to wildlife, habitat, noxious weeds, and fire.

- MTFWP have information and expertise that will assist the Service in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:

  - Biological information on wildlife and habitat conditions
  - Fisheries
  - Hunting and fishing data
  - Law enforcement expertise and assistance
  - Fire management and data
  - Noxious or invasive weeds and invasive aquatic species

- MTFWP will assign representatives and designated alternates to serve on the planning team and speak on behalf of MTFWP.

LAKE AND SANDERS COUNTIES (Counties) - Political Subdivisions of the State of Montana

Via Lake County Board of Commissioners
Via Sanders County Board of Commissioners

- The Counties and their agencies have information and expertise (Executive Order 13352) that will assist in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:

  - Cultural resources, custom heritage and history
  - Biological information on wildlife, flora, fauna and habitat conditions
  - Fisheries
  - Fire management expertise
  - Socioeconomic conditions and trends in the planning area
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  - Land Use Information and Plans

- Noxious or invasive weeds and invasive aquatic species
- Tourism and visitor services
- Public health issues
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- Resource utilization at or adjacent to the premises

- The Counties shall assign representatives and designated alternates to speak on behalf of the Counties. It is the responsibility of the assigned representatives to keep the Board of County Commissioners for the Counties briefed on the key developments of the CCP/EIS. To ensure consistency in communications, the same representatives shall serve for the duration of the project if at all possible. On occasion and as necessary and appropriate, other County Commissioners may be briefed on key developments in the planning process.

C. Roles and Responsibilities

1. The agencies listed above understand that their Cooperating Agency status does not confer to them any special authority to change, edit, or veto all or part of the CCP or EIS.

2. In cases where a Cooperating Agency provides information it considers confidential, the Service will work with a Cooperating Agency to present the information in a manner that protects the rights of the Cooperating Agency before sharing the information necessary for the environmental analysis with the other Cooperating Agencies. The release of Service information to a Federal, Tribal, State or local Agency that includes proprietary or confidential information must be reviewed under FOIA and adhere to statutory and regulatory authorities. The parties to this MOU will have access to all information necessary for their Cooperating Agency participation in the environmental analysis to the extent permitted by applicable law. The parties agree not to release pre-decisional information (including working drafts) in a manner that undermines the Service's intent to provide accurate information to the public about its planning process as described under III. A. 4. When any of the Cooperating Agencies in this MOU must disclose information under their disclosure laws, the Service requests notification of any public disclosure of CCP/EIS documents made by an Agency to this agreement (43 CFR 46.225 (d)).

3. The Service possesses sole authority to direct the actions of its Contractors.

4. The Service is responsible for making all substantive decisions involving the CCP/EIS and is the final decision maker for disputes that may arise in the process. The Cooperating Agencies agree that, once such disputes are resolved, they will not be revisited. However, the Cooperating Agencies retain the right to comment on all issues related to the CCP/EIS, including those in dispute, through the normal NEPA process.

5. Veto or decision-making power does not accompany Cooperating Agency status. As the lead Agency charged with carrying out the NEPA process under Section 102(2) (c) of NEPA, the Service retains sole decision-making authority over the CCP/EIS and its process.

6. The Service or Cooperating Agencies may terminate this agreement by providing written notice of the termination to the other parties.

IV. Authority

This memorandum is entered into under the following laws, authorities and regulations:

A. National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, PL 91-190, 42 U.S.C. 4321

B. Council of Environmental Quality NEPA Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508)

C. National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended (16USC 668dd et seq.) The act formally defines the mission of the Refuge System as the administration of *"a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitat within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans" (16 USC 668dd(a)(2)).*

V. Process and Procedure

1. The Service is the lead Agency for ensuring full compliance of the CCP and EIS with the requirements of NEPA. Under applicable laws, rules, regulations, orders, and policies, the Service shall ensure that all necessary consultation and consideration is performed with all Federal, State, Tribal, and local governments and private organizations.

2. The Service will coordinate and consult with the Cooperating Agencies throughout the preparation of the CCP/EIS, particularly during the scoping and the Draft CCP/EIS development and impact analysis. This consultation is to assess alternatives accurately; identify areas that require clarification; and to avoid, mitigate, or otherwise address impacts to the natural environment.

3. The Service has full responsibility for implementing procedures and regulations including, but not limited to, public review of the CCP/EIS, public distribution of the CCP/EIS, and required decision documentation.

4. The Service will arrange, announce, and conduct scoping meetings and will analyze the results.

5. The Service will meet with the Cooperating Agencies at least once during each strategic phase of the planning process (Scoping, Alternatives, Draft CCP/EIS, and Final CCP/EIS) and more often if needed. All Cooperating Agencies may participate in discussions on the proposed action and on special or critical resource needs related to the plan. The Service will provide the Cooperating Agencies with opportunities to opportunities to submit alternatives and mitigation measures, and to review and comment on all of these and the preliminary Draft and Final CCP/EIS. The Cooperating Agencies will provide comments to the Service within the overall time schedule.

6. The Service will provide copies of correspondence to the Cooperating Agencies as it applies to their area(s) of expertise, and the development of alternatives and the plan.

7. Through consultation with the Cooperating Agencies, the Service is responsible for selection of the Preferred Alternative and preparation of the Record of Decision. The Service's Regional Director for Region 6, Mountain-Prairie Region is the final decision maker for the Record of Decision.

8. The primary designated points of contacts for the Service shall be the NBR Complex Project Leader, Jeff King, and Planning Team Co-Leaders, Bernardo Garza and Toni Griffin (Region 6, Mountain-Prairie Region,

Division of People, Policy and Planning, Branch of Policy and Planning, Lakewood, Colorado). Other NBR Complex staff and personnel from the Service's Region 6 may also serve on the planning team.

9. Each Cooperating Agency shall designate representatives to serve on the planning team. If the designated representative(s) is not able to fulfill the duties, the Cooperating Agency shall designate a new representative in writing to the Service. Given the three-year planning schedule, those contacts are not specifically identified in this MOU, but will be documented in Memorandum to the Files by the Planning Team Leaders of all planning team members and updated as necessary. In order to ensure the consistency in communications, the designated representatives should make every effort to attend planning team meetings over the length of the planning process.

10. The Cooperating Agencies shall provide responses to data requests and provide review comments to the Service within the overall planning schedule.

11. The Service will document all meetings, emails, and phone conversations for inclusion in the Administrative Record for the CCP/EIS. The Service will maintain the official Administrative Record.
12. The Service will have primary responsibility for writing and rewriting all sections, parts, or chapters of the CCP/EIS and for reestablishing a schedule for completion of chapters consistent with the overall planning schedule. As appropriate, Cooperating Agencies may also help accomplish the same.

13. The Service will be the recipient of all comments on the CCP/EIS resulting from the review and comment periods.

13. Upon revision of the Draft CCP/EIS, the Service will provide the Cooperating Agencies with a list of the significant changes in the Final CCP/EIS.

VII. Administration

1. Modifications to this MOU may be proposed by the Service or by the Cooperating Agencies and shall become effective upon the written approval of all parties. Changes to this MOU must be initialed and dated on each replacement page by an authorized agent of each party.

2. Any party may withdraw from this MOU after 30 days written notice of their intention to do so to the other parties.

3. Nothing in this agreement will be construed as limiting or affecting in any way the authority or responsibility of the Service or the Cooperating Agencies to perform within their authority.

4. This MOU is not intended to create, nor shall this MOU be construed or interpreted as creating, a binding or legally enforceable contract among the parties. The sole remedy for the failure of a party to fully comply with the provisions of this MOU shall be termination hereof.

This MOU will become effective upon the signature of all of its participants.

Approved

_____ _____
Jeff King, Project Leader, Date
National Bison Range Complex

_____ _____
Stanley Speaks, Regional Director Date
Bureau of Indian Affairs – Northwest Regional Office

_____ _____
Vernon Finley, Chairman Date
Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes

_____ _____
Neil Anderson, Regional Wildlife Program Manager Date
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

_____ _____
Gale Decker Date
Lake County Board of Commissioners
A political subdivision of the State of Montana

_____ _____
Carol Brooker, Presiding Officer Date
Sanders County Board of Commissioners
A political subdivision of the State of Montana

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Williams, James
Cc: King, Jeff
Subject: Re: NBR CCP MOU
Date: Tuesday, September 12, 2017 2:16:18 PM
Attachments: NBR CCP and EIS Cooperating Agencies MOU.pdf

Jim,

I'm attaching here the MOU with MTFWP included.

I don't have Neil's email. I ask if you could please forward it to him for review and signature.

Afterwards Neil will need to give the signed original to Jeff, so Jeff can sign it and move it to the rest of the representatives of the cooperating agencies for signature.

Thank you

Bernardo Garza

On Tue, Sep 12, 2017 at 10:52 AM, Williams, James <jiwilliams@mt.gov> wrote:

> Thanks. Put Neil Anderson – FWP Regional Wildlife Program Manager, on the signature line.
>
> JW
>
> **From:** King, Jeff [mailto:jeff_king@fws.gov]
> **Sent:** Tuesday, September 12, 2017 10:50 AM
> **To:** Williams, James <jiwilliams@mt.gov>
> **Cc:** Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>
> **Subject:** Re: NBR CCP MOU
>
> Jim,
>
> I just realized that the copy of the MOU that I sent you didn't have MFWP included. I'm cc:ing Bernardo Garza FWS planner and he can give further directions.
>
> Thanks again.

Thanks,

jk

Jeff King, Project Leader

National Bison Range Complex

58355 Bison Range Road

Moiese, MT 59824

(406) 644-2211, ext. 204

On Tue, Sep 12, 2017 at 10:07 AM, Jeff King <jeff_king@fws.gov> wrote:

> Jim. Very good news. If you can get the signed MOU back to me I will forward to the regional office.
>
> Thanks
>
> jk
>
> Sent from my iPhone
>
> On Sep 11, 2017, at 4:59 PM, Williams, James <jiwilliams@mt.gov> wrote:
>
> > Neil Anderson will be on your team Jeff and help as needed.

Jim

From: King, Jeff [mailto:jeff_king@fws.gov]
Sent: Friday, September 8, 2017 11:55 AM
To: Williams, James <jiwilliams@mt.gov>
Subject: NBR CCP MOU

Jim,

It was good catching up yesterday.

I've attached a copy of the MOU for the National Bison Range Comprehensive Conservation Plan EIS. I look forward to your review and hope that Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks can participate in this important planning process.

Thanks,

jk

Jeff King, Project Leader

National Bison Range Complex

58355 Bison Range Road

Moiese, MT 59824

(406) 644-2211, ext. 204

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between the

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Fish and Wildlife Service
Bureau of Indian Affairs – Northwest Region

CONFEDERATED SALISH & KOOTENAI TRIBES

STATE OF MONTANA
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

LAKE COUNTY
Via Lake County Board of Commissioners
A political subdivision of the State of Montana

SANDERS COUNTY
Via Sanders County Board of Commissioners
A political subdivision of the State of Montana

Concerning
Agency Cooperation on the National Bison Range
Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

I. Introduction

The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) requests the federal, state, county, and Native American tribal governments listed above to be Cooperating Agencies in the development of the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the National Bison Range (NBR). The planning area for this CCP is the congressionally-designated NBR boundary located within the Flathead Indian Reservation in the Mission Valley, Lake and Sanders Counties, Montana.

The CCP/EIS process must comply with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) 42 U.S.C. Sec. 4321 and all subsequent regulations implementing NEPA (see Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)) regulations, 40 CFR Part 1500-1508, Department of the Interior (DOI) regulations 43 CFR part 46 and requirements listed in Departmental Manual 516 "Environmental Quality"). In addition, the Service is guided by the Fish and Wildlife Service Manual (602 FW3) on Comprehensive Conservation Planning. The Service also considered the CEQ *Memorandum for the Heads of Federal Agencies, Subject: Cooperating Agencies in Implementing the Procedural Requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act,* January 30, 2002 and the CEQ *Memorandum for Heads of Federal Agencies, Subject: Designation of Non-Federal Agencies to be Cooperating Agencies in Implementing the Procedural Requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act,* July 28, 1999, Executive Order 13352, August 26, 2004, Facilitation of Cooperative Conservation, and other CEQ, DOI, and Service guidance.

II. Purpose of Agreement

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to establish an agreement between the Service and the entities listed above regarding the roles and responsibilities of the agencies during the NEPA process. The Service will be the lead federal Agency and the listed agencies will be Cooperating Agencies on the project.

III. Justification and Roles of Cooperating Agencies

A. Justification for Cooperating Agency Status

1. Each Agency has been appointed as a Cooperating Agency because they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- the Agency has jurisdiction by law of resources within the NBR
- the Agency has specific areas of expertise/knowledge needed for completion of the CCP/EIS

2. Each Cooperating Agency agrees to provide information or data within their area(s) of expertise, attend planning team meetings, and review and comment on documents. Cooperating Agency status comes with an expectation that the Cooperating Agency will bring resources to the table to facilitate the timely completion of the NEPA process. Cooperating agencies may also help prepare or submit alternatives or mitigation measures to be considered in the process.

3. Nothing in this MOU shall obligate the Cooperating Agencies to expend appropriations or to enter into any contract or other obligation. Specific work projects or activities that involve the transfer of fund, service, or property between the parties to this MOU will require the execution of separate agreements or contracts, contingent upon the availability of funds as appropriated by Congress. Each subsequent agreement or arrangement involving the transfer of funds, services, or property shall be made in writing

and shall be independently authorized by appropriate statutory authority and regulations, including those applicable to procurement activities.

4. The Cooperating Agencies agree to assist the Service in providing accurate information to the public (43 CFR 46.225 (a) – (d)). The CCP/EIS planning process for the NBR is intended to be transparent with all agencies, organizations, stakeholder groups and the general public. The Service regularly provides information about its planning process through planning updates, press releases, briefings, hard copies of documents, and posting documents on the Service's website. All information presented to the public must be approved for publication by the Service. The Service recognizes that other Federal agencies, county representatives, and Native American tribal government representatives must adhere to their public disclosure laws as necessary; however, releases of predecisional information (including working drafts) in a manner that purposely undermines or circumvents the spirit of this MOU, which is to develop a framework to work cooperatively in developing the CCP/EIS, or consistently misrepresents the planning process may be grounds to terminate the Cooperating Agency status. When information is received, the Service cannot agree to maintain confidentiality of this information except to the extent that is permitted under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and the Privacy Act of 1974.

B. Cooperating Agencies

Bureau of Indian Affairs, Northwest Region (BIANR)

- The Service provides an opportunity for other Federal agencies to serve on planning teams (Planning Policy, Fish and Wildlife Service Manual 602 FW3).
- BIANR has information and expertise that will assist the Service in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:
    - Federal government relationships with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and other Native American tribal governments
    - Tribal lands irrigation facilities management and expertise
- BIANR will provide representatives to serve on the planning team.

Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes (CSKT)

- The Service provides an opportunity for Tribal Governments agencies to serve on planning teams (Planning Policy, Fish and Wildlife Service Manual 602 FW3).
- CSKT has information and expertise that will assist the Service in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:
    - Cultural resources management and conservation
    - Biological information on wildlife and habitat conditions
    - Fire management expertise
    - Socioeconomic conditions and trends in the planning area
    - Transportation
    - Land Use Information and Plans
    - Noxious or invasive weeds and invasive aquatic species
    - Tourism and visitor services

- Public health issues
- Emergency management and response
- Law enforcement assistance and expertise
- Fisheries

- CSKT shall assign representatives and designated alternates to speak on behalf of the Tribal Government. It is the responsibility of the assigned representatives to keep the CSKT Chairman and other Tribal Government officials briefed on the key developments of the CCP/EIS. To ensure consistency in communications, the same representatives shall serve for the duration of the project if at all possible. On occasion and as necessary and appropriate, other CSKT members may be briefed on key developments in the planning process.

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MTFWP)

- The Service provides an opportunity for State conservation agencies that have a direct land management relationship with the refuge, the opportunity to serve on planning teams (Planning Policy, Fish and Wildlife Service Manual 602 FW3). The Service and MTFWP work cooperatively on many issues pertaining to wildlife, habitat, noxious weeds, and fire.

- MTFWP have information and expertise that will assist the Service in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:

  - Biological information on wildlife and habitat conditions
  - Fisheries
  - Hunting and fishing data
  - Law enforcement expertise and assistance
  - Fire management and data
  - Noxious or invasive weeds and invasive aquatic species

- MTFWP will assign representatives and designated alternates to serve on the planning team and speak on behalf of MTFWP.

LAKE AND SANDERS COUNTIES (Counties) - Political Subdivisions of the State of Montana

Via Lake County Board of Commissioners
Via Sanders County Board of Commissioners

- The Counties and their agencies have information and expertise (Executive Order 13352) that will assist in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:

  - Cultural resources, custom heritage and history
  - Biological information on wildlife, flora, fauna and habitat conditions
  - Fisheries
  - Fire management expertise
  - Socioeconomic conditions and trends in the planning area
  - Transportation
  - Land Use Information and Plans

- Noxious or invasive weeds and invasive aquatic species
- Tourism and visitor services
- Public health issues
- Emergency management and response
- Law enforcement assistance and expertise
- Resource utilization at or adjacent to the premises

- The Counties shall assign representatives and designated alternates to speak on behalf of the Counties. It is the responsibility of the assigned representatives to keep the Board of County Commissioners for the Counties briefed on the key developments of the CCP/EIS. To ensure consistency in communications, the same representatives shall serve for the duration of the project if at all possible. On occasion and as necessary and appropriate, other County Commissioners may be briefed on key developments in the planning process.

C. Roles and Responsibilities

1. The agencies listed above understand that their Cooperating Agency status does not confer to them any special authority to change, edit, or veto all or part of the CCP or EIS.

2. In cases where a Cooperating Agency provides information it considers confidential, the Service will work with a Cooperating Agency to present the information in a manner that protects the rights of the Cooperating Agency before sharing the information necessary for the environmental analysis with the other Cooperating Agencies. The release of Service information to a Federal, Tribal, State or local Agency that includes proprietary or confidential information must be reviewed under FOIA and adhere to statutory and regulatory authorities. The parties to this MOU will have access to all information necessary for their Cooperating Agency participation in the environmental analysis to the extent permitted by applicable law. The parties agree not to release pre-decisional information (including working drafts) in a manner that undermines the Service's intent to provide accurate information to the public about its planning process as described under III. A. 4. When any of the Cooperating Agencies in this MOU must disclose information under their disclosure laws, the Service requests notification of any public disclosure of CCP/EIS documents made by an Agency to this agreement (43 CFR 46.225 (d)).

3. The Service possesses sole authority to direct the actions of its Contractors.

4. The Service is responsible for making all substantive decisions involving the CCP/EIS and is the final decision maker for disputes that may arise in the process. The Cooperating Agencies agree that, once such disputes are resolved, they will not be revisited. However, the Cooperating Agencies retain the right to comment on all issues related to the CCP/EIS, including those in dispute, through the normal NEPA process.

5. Veto or decision-making power does not accompany Cooperating Agency status. As the lead Agency charged with carrying out the NEPA process under Section 102(2) (c) of NEPA, the Service retains sole decision-making authority over the CCP/EIS and its process.

6. The Service or Cooperating Agencies may terminate this agreement by providing written notice of the termination to the other parties.

IV. Authority

This memorandum is entered into under the following laws, authorities and regulations:

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V. Process and Procedure

1. The Service is the lead Agency for ensuring full compliance of the CCP and EIS with the requirements of NEPA. Under applicable laws, rules, regulations, orders, and policies, the Service shall ensure that all necessary consultation and consideration is performed with all Federal, State, Tribal, and local governments and private organizations.

2. The Service will coordinate and consult with the Cooperating Agencies throughout the preparation of the CCP/EIS, particularly during the scoping and the Draft CCP/EIS development and impact analysis. This consultation is to assess alternatives accurately; identify areas that require clarification; and to avoid, mitigate, or otherwise address impacts to the natural environment.

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8. The primary designated points of contacts for the Service shall be the NBR Complex Project Leader, Jeff King, and Planning Team Co-Leaders, Bernardo Garza and Toni Griffin (Region 6, Mountain-Prairie Region,

Division of People, Policy and Planning, Branch of Policy and Planning, Lakewood, Colorado). Other NBR Complex staff and personnel from the Service's Region 6 may also serve on the planning team.

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13. The Service will be the recipient of all comments on the CCP/EIS resulting from the review and comment periods.

13. Upon revision of the Draft CCP/EIS, the Service will provide the Cooperating Agencies with a list of the significant changes in the Final CCP/EIS.

VII. Administration

1. Modifications to this MOU may be proposed by the Service or by the Cooperating Agencies and shall become effective upon the written approval of all parties. Changes to this MOU must be initialed and dated on each replacement page by an authorized agent of each party.

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4. This MOU is not intended to create, nor shall this MOU be construed or interpreted as creating, a binding or legally enforceable contract among the parties. The sole remedy for the failure of a party to fully comply with the provisions of this MOU shall be termination hereof.

This MOU will become effective upon the signature of all of its participants.

Approved

_____ _____
Jeff King, Project Leader, Date
National Bison Range Complex

_____ _____
Stanley Speaks, Regional Director Date
Bureau of Indian Affairs – Northwest Regional Office

_____ _____
Vernon Finley, Chairman Date
Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes

_____ _____
Neil Anderson, Regional Wildlife Program Manager Date
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

_____ _____
Gale Decker Date
Lake County Board of Commissioners
A political subdivision of the State of Montana

_____ _____
Carol Brooker, Presiding Officer Date
Sanders County Board of Commissioners
A political subdivision of the State of Montana

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Brian Upton; David Redhorse; Gale Decker; Jennifer Ekberg; Jeff King; Kelly Hogan; Bernie Petersen; McCollister, Matthew
Subject:	Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Date:	Wednesday, September 13, 2017 10:18:02 AM
Attachments:	NBR CCP and EIS Cooperating Agencies MOU.pdf

Dear Cooperating Agencies,

Late yesterday I received a formal request from Jim Williams, Regional Supervisor of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks' Region 1, that MTFWP be part of the Planning Team for the National Bison Range CCP/EIS as a cooperating agency.

Therefore, I've modified (slightly) the MOU to add MTFWP (no other changes were made to the MOU).

I'm enclosing the updated MOU (with MTFWP included). Please use this version for signing.

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Redhorse, David
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Date: Wednesday, September 13, 2017 10:33:46 AM

Is BIA expected to sign the attached copy, or should we wait until you provide the ""original" signature sheet (traveling among the agencies)?

On Wed, Sep 13, 2017 at 9:18 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Dear Cooperating Agencies,
>
> Late yesterday I received a formal request from Jim Williams, Regional Supervisor of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks' Region 1, that MTFWP be part of the Planning Team for the National Bison Range CCP/EIS as a cooperating agency.
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>
> I'm enclosing the updated MOU (with MTFWP included). Please use this version for signing.
>
> --
> **Bernardo Garza**
> **Planning Team Leader**
> **Branch of Policy and Planning**
> **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region**
> **Office (303) 236-4377**
> **Fax (303) 236-4792**

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Redhorse, David
Subject:	Re: Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Date:	Wednesday, September 13, 2017 11:47:17 AM

Hi David,

Please wait until we can get you the original for signature.

Thanks

On Wed, Sep 13, 2017 at 10:33 AM, Redhorse, David <david.redhorse@bia.gov> wrote:

> Is BIA expected to sign the attached copy, or should we wait until you provide the ""original" signature sheet (traveling among the agencies)?
>
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>> **Bernardo Garza**
>> **Planning Team Leader**
>> **Branch of Policy and Planning**
>> **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region**
>> **Office (303) 236-4377**
>> **Fax (303) 236-4792**

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Redhorse, David
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Date: Wednesday, September 13, 2017 11:47:56 AM

---

we will wait. thanks

On Wed, Sep 13, 2017 at 10:47 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Hi David,
>
> Please wait until we can get you the original for signature.
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> > > **Bernardo Garza**
> > > **Planning Team Leader**
> > > **Branch of Policy and Planning**
> > > **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region**
> > > **Office (303) 236-4377**
> > > **Fax (303) 236-4792**
>
> --
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> **Fax (303) 236-4792**

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Jeff King; Kevin Shinn
Subject: Purposes, Vision, and Goals Workshop
Date: Friday, September 15, 2017 12:08:52 PM

Gentlemen,

I hope you, your families, and staff are safe.

I'm so very glad to see weather reports stating that it is finally raining (and even snowing) throughout the NBRC area. I hope that puts and end to the fires and fire danger.

I'm writing to ask if both of you could let me know possible dates that would work for you and the staff of NBRC to hold the 1-day Purposes, Vision, and Goals workshop in October.

This workshop will be the last CCP-related meeting for which I recommend that all, or as many of the staff participate. Future CCP-related workshops will not necessitate that the entire staff participate. But for this one it is always a good idea to have as many staffers as possible.

So, if you could share with me (as soon as you can) some possible dates in October, I will communicate those to the folks here in the RO and to the cooperating agencies.

Thank you

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
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Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Shinn, Kevin
To: Garza, Bernardo
Cc: Jeff King
Subject: Re: Purposes, Vision, and Goals Workshop
Date: Tuesday, September 19, 2017 1:59:26 PM

Bernardo,

October is an extremely busy month for us and few days are available for all of us. If the NBR Round-up is scheduled for 10/16-17 and Dee's Visitor Service Review is cancelled that week, the days that Beverly and I could both be available are 10/18-20 and 10/30-31. We may be able to do 10/24 or 10/26, but right now I am trying to keep that open as it is our Youth Firearms Elk/Deer week and I need days off as I am working weekends.

On Fri, Sep 15, 2017 at 12:08 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Gentlemen,
>
> I hope you, your families, and staff are safe.
>
> I'm so very glad to see weather reports stating that it is finally raining (and even snowing) throughout the NBRC area. I hope that puts and end to the fires and fire danger.
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> I'm writing to ask if both of you could let me know possible dates that would work for you and the staff of NBRC to hold the 1-day Purposes, Vision, and Goals workshop in October.
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> **Fax (303) 236-4792**

--
Kevin J. Shinn
Manager/Federal Wildlife Officer
Lost Trail NWR/NW Montana WMD
406-858-2216 Office
406-260-5192 cell

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Shinn, Kevin
Subject: Re: Purposes, Vision, and Goals Workshop
Date: Tuesday, September 19, 2017 2:03:12 PM

Understood Kevin.

Thank you letting me know and I hope you don't have to continue working weekends.

On Tue, Sep 19, 2017 at 1:59 PM, Shinn, Kevin <kevin_shinn@fws.gov> wrote:

> Bernardo,
>
> October is an extremely busy month for us and few days are available for all of us. If the NBR Round-up is scheduled for 10/16-17 and Dee's Visitor Service Review is cancelled that week, the days that Beverly and I could both be available are 10/18-20 and 10/30-31. We may be able to do 10/24 or 10/26, but right now I am trying to keep that open as it is our Youth Firearms Elk/Deer week and I need days off as I am working weekends.
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SIGN-IN SHEET

National Bison Range Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plans

Public Scoping Meeting

August 30, 2017, Missoula, Montana

Name	Affiliation
Joe Anderson	USFWS Volenteer
Murlene Anderson	" "
Pat + Jim Habeck	Interested citizens
Roy Vallejo	" "
Judy Silverstein	ICE AGE FLOODS NATIONAL GEOLOGIC TRAIL
Rose Leach	Five Valleys Audubon
Jedd Sanchez-Gorton	Student
Skip Palmer	Interested Citizen
Marion R Kaschke	" "
Brittany Palmer	University of Montana grad student
Jim Brown	Interested citizen, Five Valleys Audubon
Carol E. Kleinert	self
Hannah Specht	Interested Citizen & Student
Sherry McLauchlan	Ice Age Floods Institute Glacial Lake Missoula Chpt
Kimberly Ence	Intermountain Bison, writer.
~~Virginia Hyler~~	~~FWS~~
Peter Heyler	
taylor page	the rattlesnakes
GREG MUNTHER	Montana Backcountry Hunters + Anglers
ROBIN SAHA	
Henry Reich	Science Communicator & US Citizen
Claudia Narciso	MT chap Sierra Club
Brian Upton	CSKT
Mike Koole	USFWS
Beverly Skinner	USFWS

SIGN-IN SHEET

National Bison Range Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plans

Public Scoping Meeting

August 30, 2017, Missoula, Montana

Name	Affiliation
Amy Link	FWS
Jeff King	↓
Kelly Hagan	
Mary McCollister	
Kevin Shinn	
GREGORY KENNETT	
Kent Watson	
Bernardo Garza	FWS
JACK RENEAU	
SUSAN RENEAU	
Wally Congdon	LH City
Micah Helser	BLM
Peter LESICA	
LARRY DVORAK	
Christine Wren	Montana Natural History Center
John MANSHIP	self
Adam Bavier	Ecology Project International
Deena Mansour	[illegible] / Mansfield Center, UM
Russ Talmo	Defenders of Wildlife
Diane Emmons	FWS
Steve McArthur	350 MONTANA
Thurston Elfstrom	Montana Natural History Center
Erin Clark	

SIGN-IN SHEET

National Bison Range Complex

Comprehensive Conservation Plan

June 6, 2017 Scoping Meeting, Polson MT

NAME	AFFILIATION
Susan Reneau	??
Dale Decker	Lake Co. Commissioner
Marvin Kaschke	
Skip Palmer	
Brittany Palmer	
Roy Snyder	
BRIAN UPTON	CSKT
Rob Chaney	Missoulian
Dave Stipe	Lake County Commissioner
Philip Barney	Protect Public Land, LLC
CALEB SOPTELEAN	Valley Journal
Dan Decker	CSKT

SIGN-IN SHEET

National Bison Range Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plans

Public Scoping Meeting

August 30, 2017, Polson, Montana

Name	Affiliation
EVAN CARTER	FLATHEAD COUNTY WEED DEPT.
Amy Lisk	USFWS
Pat Jamieson	Retired USFWS
DAVE FITZPATRICK	USFWS "VOL"
Dean Vaughan	USFWS
Debi Soukup	citizen
Constanza vonderPahlen	Flathead hakers
Gael Bissell	Flathead Audubon Society
Kelly Hogan	USFWS -
BERNARDO GARZA	USFWS - LAKEWOOD, CO
JAMES ROGERS	MISSION MOUNTAIN AUDUBON
Dave Stipe	Lake County
Mike Koole	USFWS
Ashley Fox	Lake County Leader
Caleb Sopteleon	Reporter Valley Journal
Dale Becker	CSKT
MATTHEW McCollister	USFWS

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Brian Upton
Bcc:	Kelly Hogan; Jeff King
Subject:	Public Scoping Meetings Sign In Sheets
Date:	Thursday, September 21, 2017 9:47:29 AM
Attachments:	NBRC Scoping Mtg Kalispell MT 06072017 Sign In.pdf NBRC Scoping Mtg Missoula MT 08302017 Sign In.pdf NBRC Scoping Mtg Polson MT 06062017 Sign In.pdf NBRC Scoping Mtg Polson MT 08302017 Sign In.pdf

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I'm sorry for what happened to your father. I hope he is recuperating.

Take care

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Bernardo Garza
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Fax (303) 236-4792

SIGN-IN SHEET

National Bison Range Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plans

Public Scoping Meeting

August 30, 2017, Missoula, Montana

Name	Affiliation
Joe Anderson	USFWS Volenteer
Murlene Anderson	" "
Pat + Jim Habeck	Interested citizens
Roy Vallejo	" "
Judy Silverstein	ICE AGE FLOODS NATIONAL GEOLOGIC TRAIL
Rose Leach	Five Valleys Audubon
Jedd Sanchez-Gorton	Student
Skip Palmer	Interested Citizen
Marion R Kaschke	" "
Brittany Palmer	University of Montana grad student
Jim Brown	Interested citizen, Five Valleys Audubon
Carol E. Kleinert	self
Hannah Specht	Interested Citizen & Student
Sherry McLauchlan	Ice Age Floods Institute Glacial Lake Missoula Chpt
Kimberly Ence	Intermountain Bison, writer.
~~Virginia Hyler~~	~~FWS~~
Peter Heyler	
taylor page	the rattlesnakes
GREG MUNTHER	Montana Backcountry Hunters + Anglers
ROBIN SAHA	
Henry Reich	Science Communicator & US Citizen
Claudia Narciso	MT chap Sierra Club
Brian Upton	CSKT
Mike Koole	USFWS
Beverly Skinner	USFWS

SIGN-IN SHEET

National Bison Range Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plans

Public Scoping Meeting

August 30, 2017, Missoula, Montana

Name	Affiliation
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Jeff King	↓
Kelly Hagan	
Mary McCollister	
Kevin Shinn	
GREGORY KENNETT	
Kent Watson	
Bernardo Garza	FWS
JACK RENEAU	
SUSAN RENEAU	
Wally Congdon	LH City
Micah Helser	BLM
Peter LESICA	
LARRY DVORAK	
Christine Wren	Montana Natural History Center
John MANSHIP	self
Adam Bavier	Ecology Project International
Deena Mansour	[illegible] / Mansfield Center, UM
Russ Talmo	Defenders of Wildlife
Diane Emmons	FWS
Steve McArthur	350 MONTANA
Thurston Elfstrom	Montana Natural History Center
Erin Clark	

SIGN-IN SHEET

National Bison Range Complex

Comprehensive Conservation Plan

June 6, 2017 Scoping Meeting, Polson MT

NAME	AFFILIATION
Susan Reneau	??
Dale Decker	Lake Co. Commissioner
Marvin Kaschke	
Skip Palmer	
Brittany Palmer	
Roy Snyder	
BRIAN UPTON	CSKT
Rob Chaney	Missoulian
Dave Stipe	Lake County Commissioner
Philip Barney	Protect Public Land, LLC
CALEB SOPTELEAN	Valley Journal
Dan Decker	CSKT

SIGN-IN SHEET

National Bison Range Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plans

Public Scoping Meeting

August 30, 2017, Polson, Montana

Name	Affiliation
EVAN CARTER	FLATHEAD COUNTY WEED DEPT.
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Pat Jamieson	Retired USFWS
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Dean Vaughan	USFWS
Debi Soukup	citizen
Constanza vonderPahlen	Flathead hakers
Gael Bissell	Flathead Audubon Society
Kelly Hogan	USFWS -
BERNARDO GARZA	USFWS - LAKEWOOD, CO
JAMES ROGERS	MISSION MOUNTAIN AUDUBON
Dave Stipe	Lake County
Mike Koole	USFWS
Ashley Fox	Lake County Leader
Caleb Sopteleon	Reporter Valley Journal
Dale Becker	CSKT
MATTHEW McCollister	USFWS

From:	Hogan, Kelly
To:	Will Meeks; Bernardo Garza
Subject:	Fwd: Public Scoping Meetings Sign In Sheets
Date:	Thursday, September 21, 2017 9:50:28 AM
Attachments:	NBRC Scoping Mtg Kalispell MT 06072017 Sign In.pdf NBRC Scoping Mtg Missoula MT 08302017 Sign In.pdf NBRC Scoping Mtg Polson MT 06062017 Sign In.pdf NBRC Scoping Mtg Polson MT 08302017 Sign In.pdf

---

FYI
---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Garza, Bernardo** <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>
Date: Thu, Sep 21, 2017 at 9:47 AM
Subject: Public Scoping Meetings Sign In Sheets
To: Brian Upton <brian.upton@cskt.org>

Good morning Brian,

Kelly Hogan asked me to forward to you a copy of the electronic version of the sign in sheets for the four scoping meetings we held in Montana for both of the CCPs we are working on.

I'm attaching those files here. Please let me know if you have any issues opening them.

I'm sorry for what happened to your father. I hope he is recuperating.

Take care

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Bernardo Garza
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Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

SIGN-IN SHEET

National Bison Range Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plans

Cooperating Agencies Meeting

August 29, 2017, Ninepipes Lodge, Charlo, Montana

Name	Affiliation
Glen E Mayera	Sanders County Commissioner
Beverly Skinner	Lost Trail NWR
Diane Emmons	Visitor Services & Outreach
DARREN THOMAS	U.S FISH+WILDLIFE
DAVID REDHORSE	BIA
Mary Danno	Visitor Services & Outreach - FWS
KAREN Shoemaker	Budget - US fish + Wildlife
JEFF KING	USFWS
Kevin J. Shinn	USFWS, Lost Trail NWR
Wally Cox, Jr.	Lake County
Gale Decker	Lake Co. Commissioner
Mike Koole	USFWS/NBR
Kelly Hogan	Acting Branch Chief, Planning & Policy
Amy Lisk	USFWS - NBR
MATTHEW MCOLLISTER	USFWS - CMR
BRIAN UPTON	CSKT - Legal
TOM McDONALD	CSKT - Fish, Wildlife & Rec. Div.
Dale Becker	CSKT Wildlife Management Program
BERNARDO GARZA	USFWS - R6, PLANNING
Dean Vaughan	USFWS - PFW - NBR

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Brian Upton
Subject: Re: Public Scoping Meetings Sign In Sheets
Date: Thursday, September 21, 2017 10:33:45 AM
Attachments: Aug 29 2017 Coop Agencies Mtg Sign In Sheet.pdf

Absolutely. I'm attaching it here.

I'm very glad to hear about your father's improving condition.

Take care

On Thu, Sep 21, 2017 at 10:31 AM, Brian Upton <Brian.Upton@cskt.org> wrote:

> Hi Bernardo,
>
> I appreciate the information. Could you also send me the sign-up sheet for the cooperating agency meeting held at Ninepipes? I believe there were a couple of individuals there whose names I did not get.
>
> Thanks also for your good words about my father. He is home and appears to be doing really well, so I'm hoping that continues.
>
> Thanks again,
>
> BU
>
> **From:** Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
> **Sent:** Thursday, September 21, 2017 9:47 AM
> **To:** Brian Upton
> **Subject:** Public Scoping Meetings Sign In Sheets
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Dale Becker	CSKT Wildlife Management Program
BERNARDO GARZA	USFWS - R6, PLANNING
Dean Vaughan	USFWS - PFW - NBR

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Kelly Hogan
Subject:	Fwd: Public Scoping Meetings Sign In Sheets
Date:	Thursday, September 21, 2017 10:34:21 AM
Attachments:	Aug 29 2017 Coop Agencies Mtg Sign In Sheet.pdf

FYI

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Garza, Bernardo** <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>
Date: Thu, Sep 21, 2017 at 10:33 AM
Subject: Re: Public Scoping Meetings Sign In Sheets
To: Brian Upton <Brian.Upton@cskt.org>

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Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning

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From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Jeff King; Kevin Shinn
Subject: Re: Purposes, Vision, and Goals Workshop
Date: Thursday, September 21, 2017 12:19:36 PM

Folks,

Since October is so busy for the NBR and Lost Trail staffs, would one of the days of the week of Nov. 6 work for you and the rest of the NBRC staff for the Purposes/Vision/Goals workshop?

Kelly Hogan has asked me to see if we could have it sometime during that week if at all possible because Will Meeks wants to participate in it and he is available during that week.

Please let me know.

Thanks

Bernardo

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> **Branch of Policy and Planning**
> **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region**
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--
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From: Shinn, Kevin
To: Garza, Bernardo
Cc: Jeff King
Subject: Re: Purposes, Vision, and Goals Workshop
Date: Thursday, September 21, 2017 4:46:01 PM

Bernardo,

Beverly and I could make a day that week.

On Thu, Sep 21, 2017 at 12:19 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Folks,
>
> Since October is so busy for the NBR and Lost Trail staffs, would one of the days of the week of Nov. 6 work for you and the rest of the NBRC staff for the Purposes/Vision/Goals workshop?
>
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>
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Kevin J. Shinn
Manager/Federal Wildlife Officer
Lost Trail NWR/NW Montana WMD
406-858-2216 Office
406-260-5192 cell

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Shinn, Kevin
Cc: Jeff King
Subject: Re: Purposes, Vision, and Goals Workshop
Date: Friday, September 22, 2017 7:50:44 AM

Great.

I hope it works for Jeff and the folks at NBR

I'll keep you posted.

On Thu, Sep 21, 2017 at 4:45 PM, Shinn, Kevin <kevin_shinn@fws.gov> wrote:

> Bernardo,
>
> Beverly and I could make a day that week.
>
> On Thu, Sep 21, 2017 at 12:19 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> > Folks,
> >
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> > > I'm writing to ask if both of you could let me know possible dates that would work for you and the staff of NBRC to hold the 1-day Purposes, Vision, and Goals workshop in October.
> > >
> > > This workshop will be the last CCP-related meeting for which I recommend that all, or as many of the staff participate. Future CCP-related workshops will not necessitate that the entire staff participate. But for this one it is always a good idea to have as many staffers as possible.

So, if you could share with me (as soon as you can) some possible dates in October, I will communicate those to the folks here in the RO and to the cooperating agencies.

Thank you

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

--
Kevin J. Shinn
Manager/Federal Wildlife Officer
Lost Trail NWR/NW Montana WMD
406-858-2216 Office
406-260-5192 cell

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Sean Donahoe
To: terri_ferguson@fws.gov; bernardo_garza@fws.gov
Cc: Elizabeth Powell; Erika Wettergreen
Subject: CCPs for National Bison Range Complex
Date: Monday, September 25, 2017 10:53:09 AM

Hi Terri and Bernardo,

We are excited that Marstel-Day was selected to support the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on this important work for the National Bison Range Complex. I am the proposed project manager for Marstel-Day for this contract and our team is looking forward to getting started. Erika Wettergreen who is cc'ed on this email is our designated lead for facilitation service tasks, and I'll be overseeing the project and leading the NEPA analysis support tasks. Both Erika and Elizabeth Powell will be providing general support to the project, as well as other staff identified in our proposal.

To get started, I wanted to coordinate with you all to see when you'd like to have the initial kick-off meeting for the project. Let me know what days/times work best for you and we can set up the initial conference call.

We understand much has already been done on the project, so if there are any documents or meeting notes that would be helpful for us to review prior to the kick-off meeting, feel free to email them to me and I'll distribute them to the team.

We look forward to meeting you and assisting on this important project! Sean

_____

Sean Donahoe, Ph.D.
Partner, Marstel-Day, LLC
513 Prince Edward Street, Suite 101
Fredericksburg, VA 22401
703.839.5513 (direct)
540.371.3323 (fax)
www.Marstel-Day.com

From: Ferguson, Terri
To: Sean Donahoe
Cc: bernardo_garza@fws.gov; Elizabeth Powell; Erika Wettergreen
Subject: Re: CCPs for National Bison Range Complex
Date: Monday, September 25, 2017 11:34:29 AM

Thanks Sean and we look forward to working with you. I will not need to be involved in the kickoff unless Bernardo feels the need for me to be. Having said that, I am always available if something comes up contractually so please feel free to reach out to me whenever you feel the need. Thanks again.

On Mon, Sep 25, 2017 at 10:52 AM, Sean Donahoe <sd@marstel-day.com> wrote:

> Hi Terri and Bernardo,
>
> We are excited that Marstel-Day was selected to support the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on this important work for the National Bison Range Complex. I am the proposed project manager for Marstel-Day for this contract and our team is looking forward to getting started. Erika Wettergreen who is cc'ed on this email is our designated lead for facilitation service tasks, and I'll be overseeing the project and leading the NEPA analysis support tasks. Both Erika and Elizabeth Powell will be providing general support to the project, as well as other staff identified in our proposal.
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>
> _____
>
> Sean Donahoe, Ph.D.
>
> Partner, Marstel-Day, LLC
>
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>
> Fredericksburg, VA 22401
>
> 703.839.5513 (direct)

> 540.371.3323 (fax)
>
> www.Marstel-Day.com

--
Terri Ferguson
Supervisory Contract Specialist
US Fish & Wildlife
134 Union Blvd
Lakewood, CO 80228
Terri_Ferguson@fws.gov
303-236-4321

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Sean Donahoe
Cc:	terri_ferguson@fws.gov; Elizabeth Powell; Erika Wettergreen
Subject:	Re: CCPs for National Bison Range Complex
Date:	Monday, September 25, 2017 11:38:37 AM

Hello Sean,

Those of us in the Service's Region 6 Branch of Policy and Planning and the staff of the National Bison Range Complex (NBRC) look forward to working with you, Erika, and Elizabeth on the development of the NBRC CCPs and NEPA documents. We are very pleased that the contract has been awarded to a company with such a great reputation and with experience working in similar projects with our agency.

I would like to give you a call as soon as possible to get to know each other and talk about the status of the planning process, the kick-off meeting, and about your experiences and lessons learned from your previous work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service).

Among the Service personnel that should participate in the kick-off meeting/conference call with me are:

Kelly Hogan, Acting Chief of the Branch of Policy and Planning

Jeff King, Project Leader, National Bison Range Complex

Kevin Shinn, Refuge Manager, Lost Trail NWR

Linda Moeder, GIS and Cartography Specialist

Matt McCollister, Wildlife Biologist

I will find out what date and time works for us to hold the kick-off meeting and will communicate that to you as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, we maintain a website for the NBRC planning effort with information that would be valuable to you and your team:

https://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/refuges/nbrc.php

The units that make up the NBRC maintain websites with general information that could also be valuable to your team:

https://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/refuges/nbrc.php

https://www.fws.gov/refuge/lost_trail/

https://www.fws.gov/refuge/pablo/

https://www.fws.gov/refuge/nine-pipe/

https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Northwest_Montana_Lake_County_WMD/

https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Northwest_Montana_Flathead_County_WMD/

Also looking forward to begin working with you and your staff,

Bernardo Garza

On Mon, Sep 25, 2017 at 10:52 AM, Sean Donahoe <sd@marstel-day.com> wrote:

> Hi Terri and Bernardo,
>
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We look forward to meeting you and assisting on this important project! Sean

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Sean Donahoe, Ph.D.

Partner, Marstel-Day, LLC

513 Prince Edward Street, Suite 101

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703.839.5513 (direct)

540.371.3323 (fax)

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--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Elizabeth Powell
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Automatic reply: CCPs for National Bison Range Complex
Date: Monday, September 25, 2017 11:39:37 AM

I will be out of the office on leave through Friday, September 29, but will respond to your email as soon as possible when I return.

If you need something immediately, please feel free to try me on my cell phone.

Thank you for your patience.

Elizabeth

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Kelly Hogan; Jeff King; Kevin Shinn; McCollister, Matthew; Linda Moeder
Subject:	Fwd: CCPs for National Bison Range Complex
Date:	Monday, September 25, 2017 11:39:40 AM

Folks,

FYI

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Garza, Bernardo** <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>
Date: Mon, Sep 25, 2017 at 11:38 AM
Subject: Re: CCPs for National Bison Range Complex
To: Sean Donahoe <sd@marstel-day.com>
Cc: "terri_ferguson@fws.gov" <terri_ferguson@fws.gov>, Elizabeth Powell <epowell@marstel-day.com>, Erika Wettergreen <ewettergreen@marstel-day.com>

Hello Sean,

Those of us in the Service's Region 6 Branch of Policy and Planning and the staff of the National Bison Range Complex (NBRC) look forward to working with you, Erika, and Elizabeth on the development of the NBRC CCPs and NEPA documents. We are very pleased that the contract has been awarded to a company with such a great reputation and with experience working in similar projects with our agency.

I would like to give you a call as soon as possible to get to know each other and talk about the status of the planning process, the kick-off meeting, and about your experiences and lessons learned from your previous work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service).

Among the Service personnel that should participate in the kick-off meeting/conference call with me are:

Kelly Hogan, Acting Chief of the Branch of Policy and Planning

Jeff King, Project Leader, National Bison Range Complex

Kevin Shinn, Refuge Manager, Lost Trail NWR

Linda Moeder, GIS and Cartography Specialist

Matt McCollister, Wildlife Biologist

I will find out what date and time works for us to hold the kick-off meeting and will communicate that to you as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, we maintain a website for the NBRC planning effort with information that would be valuable to you and your team:

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https://www.fws.gov/refuge/nine-pipe/

https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Northwest_Montana_Lake_County_WMD/

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Also looking forward to begin working with you and your staff,

Bernardo Garza

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>
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We look forward to meeting you and assisting on this important project! Sean

_____

Sean Donahoe, Ph.D.

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--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader

Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
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Fax (303) 236-4792

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between the

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Fish and Wildlife Service
Bureau of Indian Affairs – Northwest Region

CONFEDERATED SALISH & KOOTENAI TRIBES

STATE OF MONTANA
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

LAKE COUNTY
Via Lake County Board of Commissioners
A political subdivision of the State of Montana

SANDERS COUNTY
Via Sanders County Board of Commissioners
A political subdivision of the State of Montana

Concerning
Agency Cooperation on the National Bison Range
Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

I. Introduction

The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) requests the federal, state, county, and Native American tribal governments listed above to be Cooperating Agencies in the development of the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the National Bison Range (NBR). The planning area for this CCP is the congressionally-designated NBR boundary located within the Flathead Indian Reservation in the Mission Valley, Lake and Sanders Counties, Montana.

The CCP/EIS process must comply with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) 42 U.S.C. Sec. 4321 and all subsequent regulations implementing NEPA (see Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)) regulations, 40 CFR Part 1500-1508, Department of the Interior (DOI) regulations 43 CFR part 46 and requirements listed in Departmental Manual 516 "Environmental Quality"). In addition, the Service is guided by the Fish and Wildlife Service Manual (602 FW3) on Comprehensive Conservation Planning. The Service also considered the CEQ *Memorandum for the Heads of Federal Agencies, Subject: Cooperating Agencies in Implementing the Procedural Requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act,* January 30, 2002 and the CEQ *Memorandum for Heads of Federal Agencies, Subject: Designation of Non-Federal Agencies to be Cooperating Agencies in Implementing the Procedural Requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act,* July 28, 1999, Executive Order 13352, August 26, 2004, Facilitation of Cooperative Conservation, and other CEQ, DOI, and Service guidance.

II. Purpose of Agreement

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to establish an agreement between the Service and the entities listed above regarding the roles and responsibilities of the agencies during the NEPA process. The Service will be the lead federal Agency and the listed agencies will be Cooperating Agencies on the project.

III. Justification and Roles of Cooperating Agencies

A. Justification for Cooperating Agency Status

1. Each Agency has been appointed as a Cooperating Agency because they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- the Agency has jurisdiction by law of resources within the NBR
- the Agency has specific areas of expertise/knowledge needed for completion of the CCP/EIS

2. Each Cooperating Agency agrees to provide information or data within their area(s) of expertise, attend planning team meetings, and review and comment on documents. Cooperating Agency status comes with an expectation that the Cooperating Agency will bring resources to the table to facilitate the timely completion of the NEPA process. Cooperating agencies may also help prepare or submit alternatives or mitigation measures to be considered in the process.

3. Nothing in this MOU shall obligate the Cooperating Agencies to expend appropriations or to enter into any contract or other obligation. Specific work projects or activities that involve the transfer of fund, service, or property between the parties to this MOU will require the execution of separate agreements or contracts, contingent upon the availability of funds as appropriated by Congress. Each subsequent agreement or arrangement involving the transfer of funds, services, or property shall be made in writing

and shall be independently authorized by appropriate statutory authority and regulations, including those applicable to procurement activities.

4. The Cooperating Agencies agree to assist the Service in providing accurate information to the public (43 CFR 46.225 (a) – (d)). The CCP/EIS planning process for the NBR is intended to be transparent with all agencies, organizations, stakeholder groups and the general public. The Service regularly provides information about its planning process through planning updates, press releases, briefings, hard copies of documents, and posting documents on the Service's website. All information presented to the public must be approved for publication by the Service. The Service recognizes that other Federal agencies, county representatives, and Native American tribal government representatives must adhere to their public disclosure laws as necessary; however, releases of predecisional information (including working drafts) in a manner that purposely undermines or circumvents the spirit of this MOU, which is to develop a framework to work cooperatively in developing the CCP/EIS, or consistently misrepresents the planning process may be grounds to terminate the Cooperating Agency status. When information is received, the Service cannot agree to maintain confidentiality of this information except to the extent that is permitted under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and the Privacy Act of 1974.

B. Cooperating Agencies

Bureau of Indian Affairs, Northwest Region (BIANR)

- The Service provides an opportunity for other Federal agencies to serve on planning teams (Planning Policy, Fish and Wildlife Service Manual 602 FW3).
- BIANR has information and expertise that will assist the Service in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:
    - Federal government relationships with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and other Native American tribal governments
    - Tribal lands irrigation facilities management and expertise
- BIANR will provide representatives to serve on the planning team.

Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes (CSKT)

- The Service provides an opportunity for Tribal Governments agencies to serve on planning teams (Planning Policy, Fish and Wildlife Service Manual 602 FW3).
- CSKT has information and expertise that will assist the Service in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:
    - Cultural resources management and conservation
    - Biological information on wildlife and habitat conditions
    - Fire management expertise
    - Socioeconomic conditions and trends in the planning area
    - Transportation
    - Land Use Information and Plans
    - Noxious or invasive weeds and invasive aquatic species
    - Tourism and visitor services

- Public health issues
- Emergency management and response
- Law enforcement assistance and expertise
- Fisheries

- CSKT shall assign representatives and designated alternates to speak on behalf of the Tribal Government. It is the responsibility of the assigned representatives to keep the CSKT Chairman and other Tribal Government officials briefed on the key developments of the CCP/EIS. To ensure consistency in communications, the same representatives shall serve for the duration of the project if at all possible. On occasion and as necessary and appropriate, other CSKT members may be briefed on key developments in the planning process.

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MTFWP)

- The Service provides an opportunity for State conservation agencies that have a direct land management relationship with the refuge, the opportunity to serve on planning teams (Planning Policy, Fish and Wildlife Service Manual 602 FW3). The Service and MTFWP work cooperatively on many issues pertaining to wildlife, habitat, noxious weeds, and fire.

- MTFWP have information and expertise that will assist the Service in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:

  - Biological information on wildlife and habitat conditions
  - Fisheries
  - Hunting and fishing data
  - Law enforcement expertise and assistance
  - Fire management and data
  - Noxious or invasive weeds and invasive aquatic species

- MTFWP will assign representatives and designated alternates to serve on the planning team and speak on behalf of MTFWP.

LAKE AND SANDERS COUNTIES (Counties) - Political Subdivisions of the State of Montana

Via Lake County Board of Commissioners
Via Sanders County Board of Commissioners

- The Counties and their agencies have information and expertise (Executive Order 13352) that will assist in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:

  - Cultural resources, custom heritage and history
  - Biological information on wildlife, flora, fauna and habitat conditions
  - Fisheries
  - Fire management expertise
  - Socioeconomic conditions and trends in the planning area
  - Transportation
  - Land Use Information and Plans

- Noxious or invasive weeds and invasive aquatic species
- Tourism and visitor services
- Public health issues
- Emergency management and response
- Law enforcement assistance and expertise
- Resource utilization at or adjacent to the premises

- The Counties shall assign representatives and designated alternates to speak on behalf of the Counties. It is the responsibility of the assigned representatives to keep the Board of County Commissioners for the Counties briefed on the key developments of the CCP/EIS. To ensure consistency in communications, the same representatives shall serve for the duration of the project if at all possible. On occasion and as necessary and appropriate, other County Commissioners may be briefed on key developments in the planning process.

C. Roles and Responsibilities

1. The agencies listed above understand that their Cooperating Agency status does not confer to them any special authority to change, edit, or veto all or part of the CCP or EIS.

2. In cases where a Cooperating Agency provides information it considers confidential, the Service will work with a Cooperating Agency to present the information in a manner that protects the rights of the Cooperating Agency before sharing the information necessary for the environmental analysis with the other Cooperating Agencies. The release of Service information to a Federal, Tribal, State or local Agency that includes proprietary or confidential information must be reviewed under FOIA and adhere to statutory and regulatory authorities. The parties to this MOU will have access to all information necessary for their Cooperating Agency participation in the environmental analysis to the extent permitted by applicable law. The parties agree not to release pre-decisional information (including working drafts) in a manner that undermines the Service's intent to provide accurate information to the public about its planning process as described under III. A. 4. When any of the Cooperating Agencies in this MOU must disclose information under their disclosure laws, the Service requests notification of any public disclosure of CCP/EIS documents made by an Agency to this agreement (43 CFR 46.225 (d)).

3. The Service possesses sole authority to direct the actions of its Contractors.

4. The Service is responsible for making all substantive decisions involving the CCP/EIS and is the final decision maker for disputes that may arise in the process. The Cooperating Agencies agree that, once such disputes are resolved, they will not be revisited. However, the Cooperating Agencies retain the right to comment on all issues related to the CCP/EIS, including those in dispute, through the normal NEPA process.

5. Veto or decision-making power does not accompany Cooperating Agency status. As the lead Agency charged with carrying out the NEPA process under Section 102(2) (c) of NEPA, the Service retains sole decision-making authority over the CCP/EIS and its process.

6. The Service or Cooperating Agencies may terminate this agreement by providing written notice of the termination to the other parties.

IV. Authority

This memorandum is entered into under the following laws, authorities and regulations:

A. National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, PL 91-190, 42 U.S.C. 4321

B. Council of Environmental Quality NEPA Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508)

C. National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended (16USC 668dd et seq.) The act formally defines the mission of the Refuge System as the administration of *"a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitat within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans" (16 USC 668dd(a)(2)).*

V. Process and Procedure

1. The Service is the lead Agency for ensuring full compliance of the CCP and EIS with the requirements of NEPA. Under applicable laws, rules, regulations, orders, and policies, the Service shall ensure that all necessary consultation and consideration is performed with all Federal, State, Tribal, and local governments and private organizations.

2. The Service will coordinate and consult with the Cooperating Agencies throughout the preparation of the CCP/EIS, particularly during the scoping and the Draft CCP/EIS development and impact analysis. This consultation is to assess alternatives accurately; identify areas that require clarification; and to avoid, mitigate, or otherwise address impacts to the natural environment.

3. The Service has full responsibility for implementing procedures and regulations including, but not limited to, public review of the CCP/EIS, public distribution of the CCP/EIS, and required decision documentation.

4. The Service will arrange, announce, and conduct scoping meetings and will analyze the results.

5. The Service will meet with the Cooperating Agencies at least once during each strategic phase of the planning process (Scoping, Alternatives, Draft CCP/EIS, and Final CCP/EIS) and more often if needed. All Cooperating Agencies may participate in discussions on the proposed action and on special or critical resource needs related to the plan. The Service will provide the Cooperating Agencies with opportunities to opportunities to submit alternatives and mitigation measures, and to review and comment on all of these and the preliminary Draft and Final CCP/EIS. The Cooperating Agencies will provide comments to the Service within the overall time schedule.

6. The Service will provide copies of correspondence to the Cooperating Agencies as it applies to their area(s) of expertise, and the development of alternatives and the plan.

7. Through consultation with the Cooperating Agencies, the Service is responsible for selection of the Preferred Alternative and preparation of the Record of Decision. The Service's Regional Director for Region 6, Mountain-Prairie Region is the final decision maker for the Record of Decision.

8. The primary designated points of contacts for the Service shall be the NBR Complex Project Leader, Jeff King, and Planning Team Co-Leaders, Bernardo Garza and Toni Griffin (Region 6, Mountain-Prairie Region,

Division of People, Policy and Planning, Branch of Policy and Planning, Lakewood, Colorado). Other NBR Complex staff and personnel from the Service's Region 6 may also serve on the planning team.

9. Each Cooperating Agency shall designate representatives to serve on the planning team. If the designated representative(s) is not able to fulfill the duties, the Cooperating Agency shall designate a new representative in writing to the Service. Given the three-year planning schedule, those contacts are not specifically identified in this MOU, but will be documented in Memorandum to the Files by the Planning Team Leaders of all planning team members and updated as necessary. In order to ensure the consistency in communications, the designated representatives should make every effort to attend planning team meetings over the length of the planning process.

10. The Cooperating Agencies shall provide responses to data requests and provide review comments to the Service within the overall planning schedule.

11. The Service will document all meetings, emails, and phone conversations for inclusion in the Administrative Record for the CCP/EIS. The Service will maintain the official Administrative Record.
12. The Service will have primary responsibility for writing and rewriting all sections, parts, or chapters of the CCP/EIS and for reestablishing a schedule for completion of chapters consistent with the overall planning schedule. As appropriate, Cooperating Agencies may also help accomplish the same.

13. The Service will be the recipient of all comments on the CCP/EIS resulting from the review and comment periods.

13. Upon revision of the Draft CCP/EIS, the Service will provide the Cooperating Agencies with a list of the significant changes in the Final CCP/EIS.

VII. Administration

1. Modifications to this MOU may be proposed by the Service or by the Cooperating Agencies and shall become effective upon the written approval of all parties. Changes to this MOU must be initialed and dated on each replacement page by an authorized agent of each party.

2. Any party may withdraw from this MOU after 30 days written notice of their intention to do so to the other parties.

3. Nothing in this agreement will be construed as limiting or affecting in any way the authority or responsibility of the Service or the Cooperating Agencies to perform within their authority.

4. This MOU is not intended to create, nor shall this MOU be construed or interpreted as creating, a binding or legally enforceable contract among the parties. The sole remedy for the failure of a party to fully comply with the provisions of this MOU shall be termination hereof.

This MOU will become effective upon the signature of all of its participants.

Approved

Jeff King, Project Leader,
National Bison Range Complex

Date

Stanley Speaks, Regional Director
Bureau of Indian Affairs – Northwest Regional Office

Date

Vernon Finley, Chairman
Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes

Date

Neil Anderson, Regional Wildlife Program Manager
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Date

Gale Decker
Lake County Board of Commissioners
A political subdivision of the State of Montana

Date

Carol Brooker

9.25.2017

Carol Brooker, Presiding Officer
Sanders County Board of Commissioners
A political subdivision of the State of Montana

Date

From:	Jennifer Ekberg
To:	Garza, Bernardo
Subject:	RE: Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Date:	Monday, September 25, 2017 1:44:32 PM
Attachments:	SKMBT_C224e17092513360.pdf
Importance:	High

Mr. Garza,
The Sanders County Commissioners have executed their portion which you will find attached. Where shall I send the hard copy original?

Thank you,

Jennifer Ekberg
Executive Assistant
Board of Commissioners
Sanders County, Montana
P.O. Box 519
Thompson Falls, MT 59873
Ph. (406) 827-6966
Fax (406) 827-4388

Confidentiality Notice: This electronic message, together with its attachments, if any, is intended to be viewed only by the individual to whom it is addressed. It may contain information that is privileged, confidential, protected information and/or exempt from disclosure under applicable law. Any dissemination, distribution or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited without prior permission. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient or if you have received this communication in error, please notify us immediately by return e-mail and delete the original message and any copies of it from your computer system.

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, September 13, 2017 10:18 AM
To: Brian Upton <brian.upton@cskt.org>; David Redhorse <david.redhorse@bia.gov>; Gale Decker <gdecker@lakemt.gov>; Jennifer Ekberg <jekberg@co.sanders.mt.us>; Jeff King <jeff_king@fws.gov>; Kelly Hogan <kelly_hogan@fws.gov>; Bernie Petersen <bernie_petersen@fws.gov>; McCollister, Matthew <matthew_mccollister@fws.gov>
Subject: Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks

Dear Cooperating Agencies,

Late yesterday I received a formal request from Jim Williams, Regional Supervisor of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks' Region 1, that MTFWP be part of the Planning Team for the National Bison Range CCP/EIS as a cooperating agency.

Therefore, I've modified (slightly) the MOU to add MTFWP (no other changes were made to the MOU).

I'm enclosing the updated MOU (with MTFWP included). Please use this version for signing.

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From:	Sean Donahoe
To:	Garza, Bernardo
Cc:	terri_ferguson@fws.gov; Elizabeth Powell; Erika Wettergreen
Subject:	RE: CCPs for National Bison Range Complex
Date:	Monday, September 25, 2017 3:56:55 PM

Hi Bernardo,

Thanks so much for all the information and the quick response…that is very helpful. …and the website is very impressive.

We'll start going through it and be ready to set up the kick-off meeting at your convenience. Feel free to give me a call anytime! Sean

_____

Sean Donahoe, Ph.D.
Partner, Marstel-Day, LLC
513 Prince Edward Street, Suite 101
Fredericksburg, VA 22401
703.839.5513 (direct)
540.371.3323 (fax)
www.Marstel-Day.com

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Monday, September 25, 2017 1:39 PM
To: Sean Donahoe <sd@marstel-day.com>
Cc: terri_ferguson@fws.gov; Elizabeth Powell <epowell@marstel-day.com>; Erika Wettergreen <ewettergreen@marstel-day.com>
Subject: Re: CCPs for National Bison Range Complex

Hello Sean,

Those of us in the Service's Region 6 Branch of Policy and Planning and the staff of the National Bison Range Complex (NBRC) look forward to working with you, Erika, and Elizabeth on the development of the NBRC CCPs and NEPA documents. We are very pleased that the contract has been awarded to a company with such a great reputation and with experience working in similar projects with our agency.

I would like to give you a call as soon as possible to get to know each other and talk about the status of the planning process, the kick-off meeting, and about your experiences and lessons learned from your previous work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service).

Among the Service personnel that should participate in the kick-off meeting/conference call with me are:

Kelly Hogan, Acting Chief of the Branch of Policy and Planning
Jeff King, Project Leader, National Bison Range Complex
Kevin Shinn, Refuge Manager, Lost Trail NWR
Linda Moeder, GIS and Cartography Specialist

Matt McCollister, Wildlife Biologist

I will find out what date and time works for us to hold the kick-off meeting and will communicate that to you as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, we maintain a website for the NBRC planning effort with information that would be valuable to you and your team:

https://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/refuges/nbrc.php

The units that make up the NBRC maintain websites with general information that could also be valuable to your team:

https://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/refuges/nbrc.php
https://www.fws.gov/refuge/lost_trail/
https://www.fws.gov/refuge/pablo/
https://www.fws.gov/refuge/nine-pipe/
https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Northwest_Montana_Lake_County_WMD/
https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Northwest_Montana_Flathead_County_WMD/

Also looking forward to begin working with you and your staff,

Bernardo Garza

On Mon, Sep 25, 2017 at 10:52 AM, Sean Donahoe <sd@marstel-day.com> wrote:

> Hi Terri and Bernardo,
>
> We are excited that Marstel-Day was selected to support the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on this important work for the National Bison Range Complex. I am the proposed project manager for Marstel-Day for this contract and our team is looking forward to getting started. Erika Wettergreen who is cc'ed on this email is our designated lead for facilitation service tasks, and I'll be overseeing the project and leading the NEPA analysis support tasks. Both Erika and Elizabeth Powell will be providing general support to the project, as well as other staff identified in our proposal.
>
> To get started, I wanted to coordinate with you all to see when you'd like to have the initial kick-off meeting for the project. Let me know what days/times work best for you and we can set up the initial conference call.
>
> We understand much has already been done on the project, so if there are any documents or meeting notes that would be helpful for us to review prior to the kick-off meeting, feel free to email them to me and I'll distribute them to the team.
>
> We look forward to meeting you and assisting on this important project! Sean
>
> ---
> Sean Donahoe, Ph.D.
> Partner, Marstel-Day, LLC
> 513 Prince Edward Street, Suite 101
> Fredericksburg, VA 22401

703.839.5513 (direct)
540.371.3323 (fax)
www.Marstel-Day.com

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From:	Bob Skinner
To:	Cecil Frost
Cc:	bernardo_garza@fws.gov
Subject:	Re: Need address for written input for the Lost Trail CCP
Date:	Monday, September 25, 2017 4:44:05 PM

MAIL TO:
Bernardo Garza and Toni Griffin, Planning Team Co-Leaders National Bison Range Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plans
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Branch of Policy and Planning P.O. Box 25486 Denver, CO 80225-0486

Cecil,
I mailed my comment to the address above. It was on the bottom of OPTIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT FORM
Bob

On Mon, Sep 25, 2017 at 4:25 PM, Cecil Frost <cecil.frost@earthlink.net> wrote:

> Mr. Garza
>
> Can you tell me if the below is the correct address for sending my written suggestions for the CCP for Lost Trail NWR? The web page was not at all clear to me on how to do this.
>
> https://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/refuges/nbrc.php
>
> **Planning team leader – Lost Trail,** Ninepipe, and Pablo National Wildlife Refuges, and Northwest Montana Wetland Management Districts
>
> **Bernardo Garza**
>
> U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
>
> Branch of Planning and Policy
>
> 134 Union Boulevard, Suite 300
>
> Lakewood, Colorado 80228
>
> bernardo_garza@fws.gov
>
> 303 / 236 4377 telephone
>
> 303 / 236 4792 fax
>
> I understand that written comments mus be received by September 30 so I suppose I will need to overnight them to be sure they are received before the cutoff. Does the address above have all the information I need for FedEx?
>
> I appreciate your help!
>
> Cecil Frost

Cecil Frost Ph.D.

Landscape Fire Ecologist

Research Collaborator, University of North Carolina

119 Potluck Farm Road

Rougemont, NC 27572-9244

(919) 906-1915 Cell phone (has voice mail)

(336) 364-1924 Home office (feel free to call days, weekends and up to 10 pm nights)

cecil.frost@earthlink.net

fine-scale mapping of presettlement fire regimes and vegetation

former member of the LANDFIRE national team for Fire Regime Condition Class

OPTIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT FORM

*Thank you for helping us plan...*your comments are very important to the development of Comprehensive Conservation Plans (CCP) for all the units of the National Bison Range Complex. The purpose of this form is to provide an additional opportunity for you to express your ideas and provide input for the future management and activities of the National Bison Range Complex.

Please submit your comments by September 30, 2017. *[Attach additional comments on a separate sheet of paper if needed.]*

Qualities

What do like the most about the different units that make up the National Bison Range Complex?

Of the units within the NBRC, the Bison Range is the one we are most familiar with. It is, therefore, the unit we really appreciate the most, for its diversity of habitat and species, and its dramatic topography. The fact that it was an island during the era of Glacial Lake Missoula is especially fascinating. The short Bitterroot Trail near the top of Red Sleep Mountain is always a treat. Finally, the views of the Mission Mountains and the Mission Valley from the pull-outs and all along the Red Sleep Mountain loop road are always spectacular. It is clearly a "gem," which needs our collective protection and support.

Topics

What do you think should be addressed in the new conservation plans for the units of the National Bison Range Complex?

Improving the interpretation and public education about the resources within each unit is of critical importance. Once the public has a good understanding of the value of all these natural resources then it will become easier for the refuge to garner the resources (dollars) it needs to address critical maintenance issues, personnel vacancies and otherwise improving the overall experience for the visiting public. For example, the visitor center at the Bison Range is woefully inadequate to serve the public it was originally designed for. Upgrading or replacing this facility should be high priority item. Obviously, with a bigger operating budget the refuge can better meet the challenges of managing the wildlife within its boundaries.

Opportunities

How do you think we should manage for wildlife habitat, provide *priority wildlife-dependent public uses, maintain and improve infrastructure, support the staff, and develop partnerships with the community?

I strongly believe the FWS should move towards ultimate management of the Bison Range by the CSKT. The Range, after all is wholly within the Reservation. The bison have always been a major cultural icon for all Native Americans so it is entirely appropriate for the Tribe to be the ultimate stewards of America's mammal.

As noted above I believe that environmental education and interpretation are the highest priority of the public uses. To assist in these efforts the FWS should work with the local communities to foster the creation of a non-profit "Friends of the National Bison Range" organization. In my own experience such an entity can assist the Service in fund-raising, for example, for a new and improved visitor center.

* priority wildlife-dependent public uses : *hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, photography, environmental education, and interpretation*

Additional comments...

We appreciate you providing any issues, input, and ideas to be considered in planning for the Complex's new Comprehensive Conservation Plans!

Mailing List

If you wish to be on our mailing list to receive more information about the CCPs of the units of the National Bison Range Complex, please provide the information below:

Yes, I wish to be on the mailing list. I understand that names and addresses on federal mailing lists must be released to the public on request, under the Freedom of Information Act.

Name Kent E. Watson

Address 225 Black Pine Trail

City Missoula State MT Zip 59803

Important: Please note that the names on the CCP Mailing List become part of the public record for this project. The Service must release the names, if requested, under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act of 1974. To be placed on our mailing list, we need your permission. Please sign below.

Signature "Signed" Date 9/26/17

Thank you again for your contribution to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife's planning effort. Please fold this letter in half, tape closed, and send via post by September 30, 2017.

Postage Required

MAIL TO:

Bernardo Garza and Toni Griffin, Planning Team Co-Leaders
National Bison Range Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plans

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Branch of Policy and Planning
P.O. Box 25486
Denver, CO 80225-0486

t a p e c l o s e d



From:	Kent Watson
To:	bernardo_garza@fws.gov
Cc:	Jeff King
Subject:	National Bison Range Complex - comments form
Date:	Tuesday, September 26, 2017 2:20:17 PM
Attachments:	user Watson, FASLA.vcf Public Comment Form - KW.pdf

---

Bernardo,

Attached please find my comments on the PDF file of the paper form you passed out at the Missoula meeting on 30 Aug 17.

Even though I'm one of the "old farts" I work more easily at the keyboard so I was finally able to figure out how to do that on the PDF. Since I don't have the pro version of Adobe, I couldn't import my signature for the FOIA release, so please consider it signed.

Just so you know, it was not real easy for me to find a way to submit my comments to you electronically. In my work I have to do a lot of this on-line searching so I ultimately found the correct tab on the main home page. I hope others who want to see this refuge flourish will succeed in getting their comments to you. (It would've been nice, for example, to have your email and web site address on the paper form.)

We look forward to the product of your planning efforts. As a land planner myself I can appreciate the complexity of the task you face.

Best regards,

Kent Watson, P.L.A., FASLA
Principal Landscape Architect/Owner
Kent Watson & Associates
Landscape Architecture
225 Black Pine Trail
Missoula, MT 59803
Office/Mobile: 406.721.3500
kentwla@gmail.com

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Kent Watson
Subject: Re: National Bison Range Complex - comments form
Date: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 2:30:06 PM

Thank you for your comments Mr. Watson and, based on your message, I'll consider your request to be in the mailing list as "signed".

Have a great day.

On Tue, Sep 26, 2017 at 2:19 PM, Kent Watson <Kentwla@blackfoot.net> wrote:

> Bernardo,
>
> Attached please find my comments on the PDF file of the paper form you passed out at the Missoula meeting on 30 Aug 17.
>
> Even though I'm one of the "old farts" I work more easily at the keyboard so I was finally able to figure out how to do that on the PDF. Since I don't have the pro version of Adobe, I couldn't import my signature for the FOIA release, so please consider it signed.
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> Kent Watson, P.L.A., FASLA
> Principal Landscape Architect/Owner
> Kent Watson & Associates
> Landscape Architecture
> 225 Black Pine Trail
> Missoula, MT 59803
> Office/Mobile: 406.721.3500
> kentwla@gmail.com

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

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Please submit your comments by September 30, 2017. *[Attach additional comments on a separate sheet of paper if needed.]*

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Name Kent E. Watson

Address 225 Black Pine Trail

City Missoula State MT Zip 59803

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Signature "Signed" Date 9/26/17

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MAIL TO:

Bernardo Garza and Toni Griffin, Planning Team Co-Leaders
National Bison Range Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plans

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Branch of Policy and Planning
P.O. Box 25486
Denver, CO 80225-0486

t a p e c l o s e d



From: Kent Watson
To: bernardo_garza@fws.gov
Subject: Fw: National Bison Range Complex - comments form
Date: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 3:48:44 PM
Attachments: Public Comment Form - KW.pdf

Bernardo,

I mistakenly sent this from my old Blackfoot account. Please use this gmail account for any reply.

Kent

From: Kent Watson
Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 2:19 PM
To: bernardo_garza@fws.gov
Cc: Jeff King
Subject: National Bison Range Complex - comments form

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Kent Watson & Associates
Landscape Architecture

225 Black Pine Trail
Missoula, MT 59803
Office/Mobile: 406.721.3500
kentwla@gmail.com

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Kent Watson
Subject: Re: Fw: National Bison Range Complex - comments form
Date: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 3:59:00 PM

Will do.

On Tue, Sep 26, 2017 at 3:47 PM, Kent Watson <kentwla@gmail.com> wrote:

> Bernardo,
>
> I mistakenly sent this from my old Blackfoot account. Please use this gmail account for any reply.
>
> Kent
>
> **From:** Kent Watson
> **Sent:** Tuesday, September 26, 2017 2:19 PM
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--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
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Signature "Signed" Date 9/26/17

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Postage Required

MAIL TO:

Bernardo Garza and Toni Griffin, Planning Team Co-Leaders
National Bison Range Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plans

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Branch of Policy and Planning
P.O. Box 25486
Denver, CO 80225-0486

t a p e c l o s e d



From: Garza, Bernardo
To: McCollister, Matthew
Subject: Fwd: Fw: National Bison Range Complex - comments form
Date: Wednesday, September 27, 2017 8:55:27 AM
Attachments: Public Comment Form - KW.pdf

Per my previous email.

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Kent Watson** <kentwla@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, Sep 26, 2017 at 3:47 PM
Subject: Fw: National Bison Range Complex - comments form
To: bernardo_garza@fws.gov

Bernardo,

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Principal Landscape Architect/Owner
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Office/Mobile: 406.721.3500
kentwla@gmail.com

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: McCollister, Matthew
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: Fw: National Bison Range Complex - comments form
Date: Wednesday, September 27, 2017 8:56:52 AM

Thanks. I'll add his comments to the file and his address to the mailing list.

On Wed, Sep 27, 2017 at 8:55 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Per my previous email.
>
> ---------- Forwarded message ----------
> From: **Kent Watson** <kentwla@gmail.com>
> Date: Tue, Sep 26, 2017 at 3:47 PM
> Subject: Fw: National Bison Range Complex - comments form
> To: bernardo_garza@fws.gov
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> I mistakenly sent this from my old Blackfoot account. Please use this gmail account for any reply.
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We look forward to the product of your planning efforts. As a land planner myself I can appreciate the complexity of the task you face.

Best regards,

Kent Watson, P.L.A., FASLA
Principal Landscape Architect/Owner
Kent Watson & Associates
Landscape Architecture
225 Black Pine Trail
Missoula, MT 59803
Office/Mobile: 406.721.3500
kentwla@gmail.com

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, **Mountain-Prairie Region**
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

--

Matthew McCollister
Wildlife Biologist
Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge
Lewistown, MT

From: McCollister, Matthew
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: Fw: National Bison Range Complex - comments form
Date: Wednesday, September 27, 2017 9:16:56 AM

Only 9 of the 24 people on the mailing list have listed their email addresses. i may be able to dig up a couple more. Would you like me to send the reminder anyway.

On Wed, Sep 27, 2017 at 8:56 AM, McCollister, Matthew <matthew_mccollister@fws.gov> wrote:

> Thanks. I'll add his comments to the file and his address to the mailing list.
>
> On Wed, Sep 27, 2017 at 8:55 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> > Per my previous email.
> >
> > ---------- Forwarded message ----------
> > From: **Kent Watson** <kentwla@gmail.com>
> > Date: Tue, Sep 26, 2017 at 3:47 PM
> > Subject: Fw: National Bison Range Complex - comments form
> > To: bernardo_garza@fws.gov
> >
> >
> > Bernardo,
> >
> > I mistakenly sent this from my old Blackfoot account. Please use this gmail account for any reply.
> >
> > Kent
> >
> >
> > **From:** Kent Watson
> > **Sent:** Tuesday, September 26, 2017 2:19 PM
> > **To:** bernardo_garza@fws.gov
> > **Cc:** Jeff King
> > **Subject:** National Bison Range Complex - comments form
> >
> > Bernardo,
> >
> > Attached please find my comments on the PDF file of the paper form you passed out at the Missoula meeting on 30 Aug 17.
> >
> > Even though I'm one of the "old farts" I work more easily at the keyboard so I was finally able to figure out how to do that on the PDF. Since I don't have the pro version of Adobe, I couldn't import my signature for the FOIA release, so please consider it signed.
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--

Matthew McCollister
Wildlife Biologist
Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge
Lewistown, MT

--

Matthew McCollister
Wildlife Biologist
Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge
Lewistown, MT

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: McCollister, Matthew
Subject: Re: Fw: National Bison Range Complex - comments form
Date: Wednesday, September 27, 2017 9:18:11 AM

Yes, please.

I'll send you the paragraphs in a couple of minutes.

On Wed, Sep 27, 2017 at 9:16 AM, McCollister, Matthew <matthew_mccollister@fws.gov> wrote:

> Only 9 of the 24 people on the mailing list have listed their email addresses. i may be able to dig up a couple more. Would you like me to send the reminder anyway.
>
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Best regards,

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Fax (406) 883-1357
lakers@flatheadlakers.org
www.flatheadlakers.org



Flathead Lakers:
Working for clean water, a healthy ecosystem, and lasting quality of life in the Flathead Watershed

National Bison Range Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plans Comments

September 27, 2017

Bernardo Garza and Toni Griffin, Planning Team Co-Leaders
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Branch of Policy and Planning
PO Box 25486
Denver, CO 80225-04865

Please accept the following comments submitted by the Flathead Lakers for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Bison Range Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) development.

The Flathead Lakers is a nonprofit, grassroots organization. Our organization was founded in 1958 and currently has over 1,500 members. We work to protect water quality in Flathead Lake and its watershed through education, advocacy and stewardship projects.

Our beautiful lakes, rivers and streams, and the fish and wildlife that depend on them are part of what makes the Flathead such a special place and are a large part of its identity. The quality of the environment contributes to our quality of life and our economy. In fact, our quality natural environment has become a competitive advantage and a major force driving economic growth in Flathead County.

The Flathead Lakers initiated the collaborative Critical Lands Project in 1999 to address concerns that rapid growth and development would damage lands and waters critical to maintaining the quality of Flathead Lake and its tributaries and the area's quality of life. The Flathead Lakers coordinate the resulting partnership, the Flathead River to Lake Initiative (R2L), which includes representatives from federal, tribal, state, and local resource management agencies, land trusts, conservation groups and landowners. R2L partners have protected close to 6,000 acres of critical lands and waters through conservation easements and land acquisitions, and restored several miles of riparian areas. Protection efforts focus on wetlands, riparian areas, floodplains, and shallow alluvial aquifers essential to maintaining clean water in Flathead Lake and its watershed, and that also provide important waterfowl and wildlife habitat, outstanding scenic vistas, and recreation opportunities. Many of these efforts help protect existing USFWS Complex properties and expand protection of bird and wildlife habitat by conserving adjacent private lands.

The USFWS National Wildlife Refuges and Waterfowl Production Areas have unique qualities worth preserving and maintaining for the local, regional, and national benefits they provide for current and future generations.

Recommendations for conservation plans

Staffing: We recommend that staffing priorities and structure be revisited to ensure proper staffing of all refuges and waterfowl production areas, including those north of Flathead Lake. Staffing needs for the refuges under jurisdiction of the Lost Trail NWR management unit should be addressed and positions filled in a timely manner in order to achieve their missions. Minimum staff positions required to manage and protect these USF&WS properties were not filled despite the availability of funding for the positions. We understand that hiring was put on hold due to management uncertainties for the Bison Range NWR and giving hiring priority to this refuge over the Lost Trail NWR management unit. This created a bottleneck for these important WPAs and NWRs.

Staff positions should be **increased** to manage, monitor, and protect the USFWS Lost Trail manage unit properties to ensure the agency is in accordance with the region's needs and challenges, and to ensure public use is compatible with the Lost Trail NWR management unit goals. Population growth and demand for outdoor recreation opportunities has increased, while growth and development also reduce neighboring habitat on private land. The public benefits of these refuges and waterfowl production areas are significant and require a commensurate level of management, research, and public education. Current staff levels far from sufficient to meet the needs and pressures placed on those properties in northwest Montana.

Conservation and Management Planning: We encourage USFWS to partner with local, state, and tribal natural resource management agencies, conservation organizations, and other groups to identify management needs and develop comprehensive plans for each property that take into account the regional landscape and conservation needs and opportunities to protect the region's unique wildlife, recreational, scenic, and other important values. Working with partners could help identify strategies and solutions that increase efficiency in use of government resources, creatively use local skills and resources, and improve management within the context of the surrounding landscapes.

Monitoring and Research: Monitoring is important to ensure management is responding appropriately to stressors and challenges. The Flathead Lake, Blasdel, and Smith Lake WPA bird and wildlife values are significant and well known. Yet, in the past, USFWS staff indicated a lack of available data. Surveys by American Bird Conservancy staff validated and recorded those values in the Flathead Lake and Smith Lake WPAs. We recommend that research and monitoring be conducted collaboratively to collect needed information and ensure that the public resources are understood and managed to protect the unique values of each area and within a larger landscape context, including wetlands, surface and ground water, fish and wildlife, recreation, and scenic beauty.

Management Within a Larger Landscape Context: CCP goals should consider the refuge and WPAs within the larger landscapes, landscape stressors, and other area conservation programs and plans to assess how USFWS properties complement and strengthen local, regional, and transboundary conservation efforts. The importance and public benefits the Bison Range Complex units and other protected areas provide have increased, not diminished, as the Flathead Valley grows and develops. Scenic areas around wetlands, lakes, and along rivers and streams, such as those near the Flathead Lake, Blasdel, and Smith Lake WPAs are prime areas for

development. Development and recreation in and around these WPAs may pose increasing challenges and may require increased management, public outreach and education, and policing to maintain conservation values, reduce stressors, and find creative management strategies that allow the public to enjoy as well as conserve their values.

Changing weather patterns, including extended summer droughts and increased temperatures, further elevate the significant role the USFWS properties play in preserving the natural values and benefits they provide. The value of the bird and wildlife habitat and water quality and quantity provided by wetlands, shallow groundwater, and associated farmland will only increase. Management solutions may require, for instance, engaging with adjacent agricultural producers to enhance wildlife benefits, partnering with neighboring landowners to provide wildlife viewing opportunities or shoreline access, in addition to increasing policing and invasive species control and management.

Conservation Goals: We recommend that the conservation values and associated management strategies discussed below for various USFWS properties be included in the CCP.

The Flathead Lake and Blasdel WPAs: The north shore of Flathead Lake stuns new visitors and long-time residents alike with its dramatic beauty. The north shore comprises a special combination of beautiful scenery, farm lands, lakeshore, wetlands and riparian habitat. It is a hot spot for waterfowl and other birds and for bird hunting. These natural assets contribute to the area's quality of life and economy, and our hunting and fishing heritage.

The USFWS Waterfowl Production Area on the north shore contains the most significant wetland acreage around Flathead Lake. The WPA and adjacent north shore lands support a high number and diversity of birds. Over 229 bird species have been recorded for the general north shore area. Bird surveys collected by the American Bird Conservancy and Montana Audubon designated the north shore as an Important Bird Area in 2009.

Waterfowl hunting is an important part of the Flathead Valley's outdoor heritage. This area is important both for hunting in the fall and nesting habitat in the spring and summer. Adjacent agricultural areas also provide important habitat and forage areas for waterfowl. Waterfowl travel between the Flathead Lake and Blasdel WPAs and other wetlands, the Flathead River, and farm fields, for feeding and resting. Farm fields often flood in the spring and provide an important food resource to thousands of migratory waterfowl such as tundra and trumpeter swans, Canada geese, northern pintails, mallards, and American widgeon. Spring migratory birds need high quality forage during migration to arrive in nesting areas in good shape for reproduction.

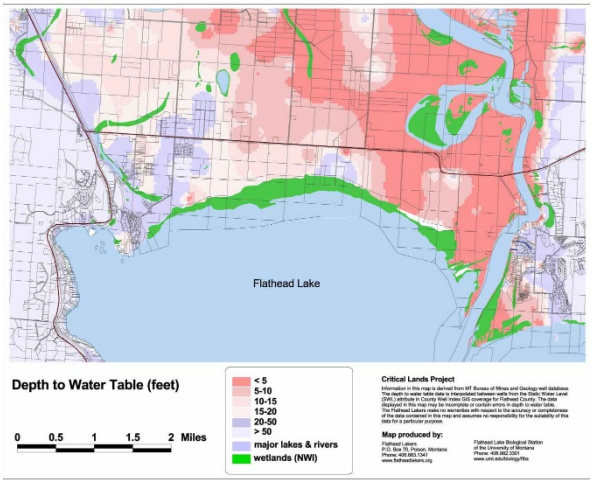


Figure 1. Depth to water table

University of Montana researchers describe Flathead Lake as one of the cleanest lakes in populated areas around the world. Clean water is a priceless natural resource that for us all. The Flathead Lake WPA's wetlands and vegetated riparian buffers help protect water quality in Flathead Lake.

Groundwater throughout much of the north shore area is less than 20 feet from the surface, and as little as two feet deep (see Figure 1). The high ground water contributes to seasonal spring flooding which provides bird habitat.

Natural beauty is a priceless asset to the Flathead Valley, for the economic benefits provided by the tourism industry and for quality of life. The breathtaking views the Flathead Lake WPA and adjacent lands offer to visitors and local residents is important to the cultural identity of the area. The value the Flathead Lake WPA plays in providing and maintaining iconic scenic beauty should not be underestimated.

Ashley Creek watershed WPAs: The Ashley Creek watershed includes the Smith Lake, Batavia, and Blasdel Waterfowl Production Areas. The Smith Lake WPA is a magnet for birds as well as bird watchers and fishermen. Several species of special concern are found in the drainage, including westslope cutthroat trout, northern leopard frog, bald eagle and common loon. Common loon pairs nest in the Ashley Creek drainage and loons forage in Smith and Foys Lake. The rare northern leopard frog, once common throughout Montana, is found in in Foys Lake, Lower Foys Lake, and the Fire Station pond. Several wetland and riparian areas in this watershed provide significant habitat for regionally significant birds, including Black Terns, red-necked grebes and wood ducks, among others.

Conservation Efforts: R2L partners have been working to protect ecologically significant areas near the USFWS WPAs to provide buffers for the WPAs and expand conservation of critical areas to protect additional habitat and associated resources and to ensure that the WPAs do not become islands in a sea of development. R2L partners have been exploring ideas for a practical conservation strategy for the north shore area and implementing conservation projects that protect its special attributes. In recent years, MT Fish, Wildlife and Parks (MFWP), a key partner, purchased over 400 acres of wetlands and farmlands, which are now the North Shore Wildlife Management Area (WMA). The North Shore WMA borders the Flathead Lake WPA and is managed by MFWP to complement the values and management plan of the Flathead Lake WPA (see Figure 2). MFWP is also working to restore wetlands and improve crop rotation to benefit foraging for birds. MFWP staff consulted with USFWS staff on wetland restoration project plans, designs, and implementation to ensure they complement USFWS management goals.

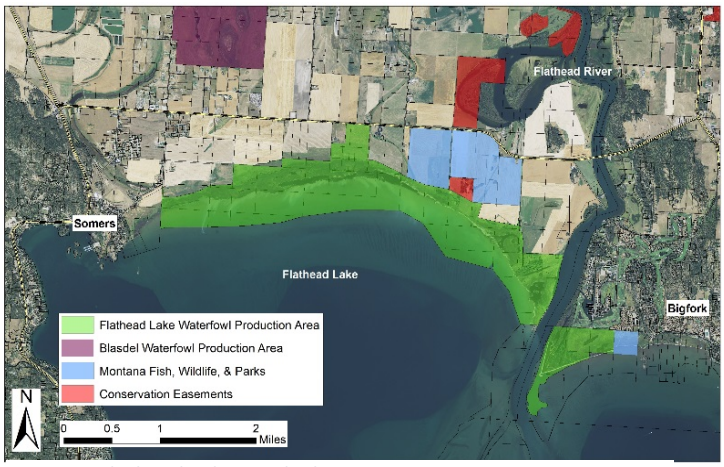


Figure 2. Flathead Lake North Shore

R2L partners have protected several properties near the Blasdel WPA, around Weaver (also known as Wiley) Slough, and bordering the Flathead River and Ashley Creek, which include significant wetland sloughs, riparian areas, and farmland (see Figure 3). These areas provide important habitat continuity for wildlife and open space. The riparian corridor along Ashley Creek, between Weaver Slough and the Fathead River, is in good condition and is widely used

by a variety of wildlife species, including grizzly bears, mountain lions, migratory waterfowl and songbirds. R2L partners are working with landowners on both the river and creek to restore riparian habitat and improve water quality and fish and wildlife habitat.

The wetlands are stop-over and foraging sites for shorebirds and waterfowl, as well as habitat for numerous amphibians, insects, fish, and mammals. They provide alternative stop-over sites when disturbance drives birds and other wildlife out of an area. They are also critical for the uptake and long-term storage of nutrients in the wetland vegetation. They are all within the FEMA floodplain boundaries and likely to provide important floodplain functions for the river.

R2L partners have also protected significant wetland habitat associated with the Smith Lake WPA and Ashley Creek (see Figure 4) through land acquisitions and donated and purchased conservation easements to protect and reduce disturbance on adjacent wetlands and farmland. Over the years, R2L partners transferred two protected areas to USFWS to expand the Smith Lake WPA, for consistent management and efficiency and efficacy of government resources.

The USFWS WPAs in the Flathead Valley are truly deserving of thoughtful consideration to ensure that the environmental quality, natural amenities, and public benefits they provide endure.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

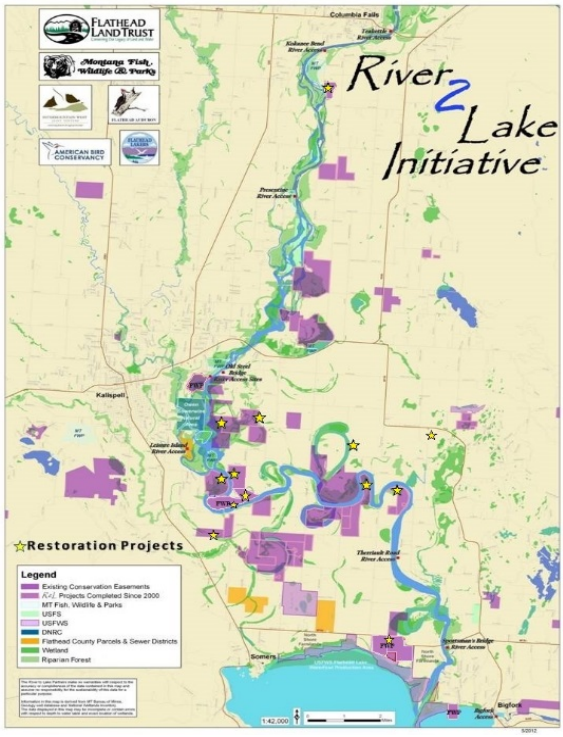


Figure 3. R2L accomplishments

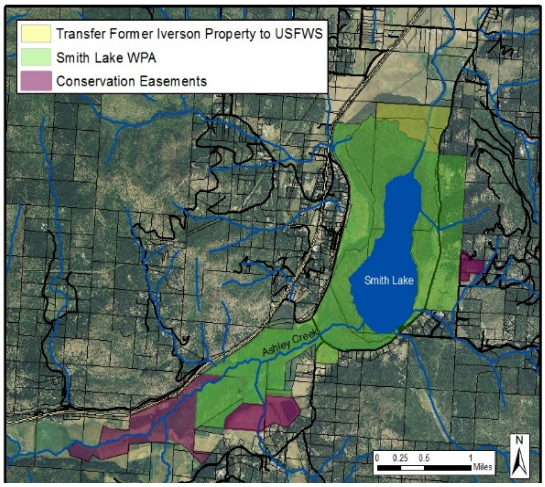


Figure 4. Smith Lake WPA

Constanza von der Pahlen

Constanza von der Pahlen
Critical Lands Program Director
Flathead Lakers

From:	Constanza von der Pahlen
To:	scoping_pablo_ninepipe@fws.gov; Scoping_NBR@fws.gov
Cc:	Skinner, Beverly; toni_griffin@fws.gov; bernardo_garza@fws.gov
Subject:	Flathead Lakers USFWS CCP comments
Date:	Thursday, September 28, 2017 3:03:36 PM
Attachments:	2017 Flathead Lakers USFWS CCPcomments.pdf

To Bernardo Garza and Toni Griffin, Planning Team Co-Leaders
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Branch of Policy and Planning

Please accept the Flathead Lakers comments, in the enclosed letter, for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Bison Range Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) development.

Thank you,

Constanza von der Pahlen
Critical Lands Program Director
Flathead Lakers

P.O. Box 70
Polson, MT 59860
406-883-1341
www.flatheadlakers.org
www.flatheadrivertolake.org

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Jeff King
Subject: Fwd: Purposes, Vision, and Goals Workshop
Date: Friday, September 29, 2017 10:35:13 AM

Hello Jeff,

Have you had an opportunity to see if the week of Nov. 6 would work for you and your staff to have the 1-day purposes, vision, and goals workshop?

Now that we have a contractor I need to coordinate that workshop with them.

Also, have you had a chance to visit the doodle poll to find a day next week to have a conference call/kick off meeting with the NEPA/Facilitation contractor?

Bernardo

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Garza, Bernardo** <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>
Date: Fri, Sep 22, 2017 at 7:50 AM
Subject: Re: Purposes, Vision, and Goals Workshop
To: "Shinn, Kevin" <kevin_shinn@fws.gov>
Cc: Jeff King <jeff_king@fws.gov>

Great.

I hope it works for Jeff and the folks at NBR

I'll keep you posted.

On Thu, Sep 21, 2017 at 4:45 PM, Shinn, Kevin <kevin_shinn@fws.gov> wrote:

> Bernardo,
>
> Beverly and I could make a day that week.
>
> On Thu, Sep 21, 2017 at 12:19 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> > Folks,
> >
> > Since October is so busy for the NBR and Lost Trail staffs, would one of the days of the week of Nov. 6 work for you and the rest of the NBRC staff for the Purposes/Vision/Goals workshop?
> >
> > Kelly Hogan has asked me to see if we could have it sometime during that week if at all possible because Will Meeks wants to participate in it and he is available during that week.
> >
> > Please let me know.
> >
> > Thanks

Bernardo

On Fri, Sep 15, 2017 at 12:08 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Gentlemen,
>
> I hope you, your families, and staff are safe.
>
> I'm so very glad to see weather reports stating that it is finally raining (and even snowing) throughout the NBRC area. I hope that puts and end to the fires and fire danger.
>
> I'm writing to ask if both of you could let me know possible dates that would work for you and the staff of NBRC to hold the 1-day Purposes, Vision, and Goals workshop in October.
>
> This workshop will be the last CCP-related meeting for which I recommend that all, or as many of the staff participate. Future CCP-related workshops will not necessitate that the entire staff participate. But for this one it is always a good idea to have as many staffers as possible.
>
> So, if you could share with me (as soon as you can) some possible dates in October, I will communicate those to the folks here in the RO and to the cooperating agencies.
>
> Thank you
>
> --
> **Bernardo Garza**
> **Planning Team Leader**
> **Branch of Policy and Planning**
> **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region**
> **Office (303) 236-4377**
> **Fax (303) 236-4792**

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

--
Kevin J. Shinn
Manager/Federal Wildlife Officer
Lost Trail NWR/NW Montana WMD
406-858-2216 Office

406-260-5192 cell

--
Bernardo Garza
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--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
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Fax (303) 236-4792

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Brian Upton; David Redhorse; Gale Decker; Jennifer Ekberg; Neil Anderson
Bcc:	Jeff King; Kevin Shinn; Kelly Hogan
Subject:	National Bison Range Complex CCPs Purposes, Vision and Goals Workshop
Date:	Friday, September 29, 2017 2:28:59 PM

Dear Cooperators,

We will hold the NBR Complex CCPs Purposes, Vision and Goals Workshop at the Red Lion Inn in Polson on Tuesday, November 7, 2017.

This will be an all-day workshop (8:30 am - 5:00 pm). I'll send you the agenda for the workshop as soon as it is ready.

Please mark your calendars and let me know if you have any questions.

I look forward to seeing all of you in Polson in November.

Have a great weekend

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Anderson, Neil
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Automatic reply: National Bison Range Complex CCPs Purposes, Vision and Goals Workshop
Date: Friday, September 29, 2017 2:30:44 PM

I will be out of the office until Oct 3rd. Sorry for any inconvenience this may cause.

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Sean Donahoe
Subject: Re: CCPs for National Bison Range Complex
Date: Friday, September 29, 2017 2:35:24 PM

Hello Sean,

I've finally heard back from all the key Service personnel that should participate in the kick-off meeting/conference call.

The date and time that works for us is Thursday, October 5, starting at 10:00 am (Mountain Time). I hope this works for you, Erika, Elizabeth, and anybody else from Marstel-Day that needs to participate.

I'm in the process of finding a conference room with conference call capability in this building that we can use for the kick-off meeting. As soon as I have the conference call number and passcode I'll forward it to you.

I would also like to give you a call on Monday to begin coordinating with you and preparing the kick-off meeting.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Have a good weekend.

Bernardo

On Mon, Sep 25, 2017 at 3:56 PM, Sean Donahoe <sd@marstel-day.com> wrote:

> Hi Bernardo,
>
> Thanks so much for all the information and the quick response…that is very helpful. …and the website is very impressive.
>
> We'll start going through it and be ready to set up the kick-off meeting at your convenience. Feel free to give me a call anytime! Sean
>
> _____
>
> Sean Donahoe, Ph.D.
>
> Partner, Marstel-Day, LLC
>
> 513 Prince Edward Street, Suite 101
>
> Fredericksburg, VA 22401

703.839.5513 (direct)

540.371.3323 (fax)

www.Marstel-Day.com

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Monday, September 25, 2017 1:39 PM
To: Sean Donahoe <sd@marstel-day.com>
Cc: terri_ferguson@fws.gov; Elizabeth Powell <epowell@marstel-day.com>; Erika Wettergreen <ewettergreen@marstel-day.com>
Subject: Re: CCPs for National Bison Range Complex

Hello Sean,

Those of us in the Service's Region 6 Branch of Policy and Planning and the staff of the National Bison Range Complex (NBRC) look forward to working with you, Erika, and Elizabeth on the development of the NBRC CCPs and NEPA documents. We are very pleased that the contract has been awarded to a company with such a great reputation and with experience working in similar projects with our agency.

I would like to give you a call as soon as possible to get to know each other and talk about the status of the planning process, the kick-off meeting, and about your experiences and lessons learned from your previous work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service).

Among the Service personnel that should participate in the kick-off meeting/conference call with me are:

Kelly Hogan, Acting Chief of the Branch of Policy and Planning

Jeff King, Project Leader, National Bison Range Complex

Kevin Shinn, Refuge Manager, Lost Trail NWR

Linda Moeder, GIS and Cartography Specialist

Matt McCollister, Wildlife Biologist

I will find out what date and time works for us to hold the kick-off meeting and will communicate that to you as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, we maintain a website for the NBRC planning effort with information that would be valuable to you and your team:

https://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/refuges/nbrc.php

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From: Sean Donahoe
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: RE: CCPs for National Bison Range Complex
Date: Monday, October 2, 2017 8:09:43 AM

Hi Bernardo,

Thanks for your email…and I hope you had a good weekend. I'm coordinating internally to verify that Oct 5th will work for the kick-off, but I think that should be fine. Today I should be available after 1pm mountain time if you want to give me a call. Take care, Sean

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From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
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From: Sean Donahoe
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: RE: CCPs for National Bison Range Complex
Date: Monday, October 2, 2017 4:46:00 PM

Hi Bernardo,

I wasn't sure if you still wanted to call me today or not, but I'm leaving work now (I'm on eastern time…). Anyways, if you're available to talk tomorrow, I'm pretty open…just give me a call at your convenience. Take care, Sean

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From: Sean Donahoe
Sent: Monday, October 02, 2017 10:09 AM
To: 'Garza, Bernardo' <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>
Subject: RE: CCPs for National Bison Range Complex

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From: Sean Donahoe
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: RE: CCPs for National Bison Range Complex
Date: Tuesday, October 3, 2017 1:37:25 PM

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Date: Tuesday, October 3, 2017 1:42:13 PM

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Planning Team Leader

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From: Sean Donahoe
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: RE: CCPs for National Bison Range Complex
Date: Tuesday, October 3, 2017 1:59:38 PM

No problem…yes, I'm available to talk today…just give me a call. Sean

_____

Sean Donahoe, Ph.D.
Partner, Marstel-Day, LLC
513 Prince Edward Street, Suite 101
Fredericksburg, VA 22401
703.839.5513 (direct)
540.371.3323 (fax)
www.Marstel-Day.com

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, October 03, 2017 3:42 PM
To: Sean Donahoe <sd@marstel-day.com>
Subject: Re: CCPs for National Bison Range Complex

Yes Sean, Thursday Oct. 5 at 10 am does work for us still.

Would you be available to talk with me on the phone yet today?

Sorry I couldn't call you yesterday...

On Tue, Oct 3, 2017 at 1:36 PM, Sean Donahoe <sd@marstel-day.com> wrote:

> Hi Bernardo,
>
> I just wanted to let you know that Thursday at 10AM mountain time does work for us…if that still works for you all. I tried calling but just got your vm, so I thought I send you an email.
>
> Just let me know when you'd like to talk about the kick-off meeting agenda and other topics. Take care, Sean
>
> _____
>
> Sean Donahoe, Ph.D.
> Partner, Marstel-Day, LLC
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>
> **From:** Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
> **Sent:** Friday, September 29, 2017 4:35 PM
> **To:** Sean Donahoe <sd@marstel-day.com>

Subject: Re: CCPs for National Bison Range Complex

Hello Sean,

I've finally heard back from all the key Service personnel that should participate in the kick-off meeting/conference call.

The date and time that works for us is Thursday, October 5, starting at 10:00 am (Mountain Time). I hope this works for you, Erika, Elizabeth, and anybody else from Marstel-Day that needs to participate.

I'm in the process of finding a conference room with conference call capability in this building that we can use for the kick-off meeting. As soon as I have the conference call number and passcode I'll forward it to you.

I would also like to give you a call on Monday to begin coordinating with you and preparing the kick-off meeting.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Have a good weekend.

Bernardo

On Mon, Sep 25, 2017 at 3:56 PM, Sean Donahoe <sd@marstel-day.com> wrote:

> Hi Bernardo,
>
> Thanks so much for all the information and the quick response…that is very helpful. …and the website is very impressive.
>
> We'll start going through it and be ready to set up the kick-off meeting at your convenience. Feel free to give me a call anytime! Sean
>
> _____
> Sean Donahoe, Ph.D.
> Partner, Marstel-Day, LLC
> 513 Prince Edward Street, Suite 101
> Fredericksburg, VA 22401
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> 540.371.3323 (fax)
> www.Marstel-Day.com
>
> **From:** Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
> **Sent:** Monday, September 25, 2017 1:39 PM
> **To:** Sean Donahoe <sd@marstel-day.com>
> **Cc:** terri_ferguson@fws.gov; Elizabeth Powell <epowell@marstel-day.com>; Erika Wettergreen <ewettergreen@marstel-day.com>
> **Subject:** Re: CCPs for National Bison Range Complex

Hello Sean,

Those of us in the Service's Region 6 Branch of Policy and Planning and the staff of the National Bison Range Complex (NBRC) look forward to working with you, Erika, and Elizabeth on the development of the NBRC CCPs and NEPA documents. We are very pleased that the contract has been awarded to a company with such a great reputation and with experience working in similar projects with our agency.

I would like to give you a call as soon as possible to get to know each other and talk about the status of the planning process, the kick-off meeting, and about your experiences and lessons learned from your previous work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service).

Among the Service personnel that should participate in the kick-off meeting/conference call with me are:

Kelly Hogan, Acting Chief of the Branch of Policy and Planning
Jeff King, Project Leader, National Bison Range Complex
Kevin Shinn, Refuge Manager, Lost Trail NWR
Linda Moeder, GIS and Cartography Specialist
Matt McCollister, Wildlife Biologist

I will find out what date and time works for us to hold the kick-off meeting and will communicate that to you as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, we maintain a website for the NBRC planning effort with information that would be valuable to you and your team:

https://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/refuges/nbrc.php

The units that make up the NBRC maintain websites with general information that could also be valuable to your team:

https://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/refuges/nbrc.php
https://www.fws.gov/refuge/lost_trail/
https://www.fws.gov/refuge/pablo/
https://www.fws.gov/refuge/nine-pipe/
https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Northwest_Montana_Lake_County_WMD/
https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Northwest_Montana_Flathead_County_WMD/

Also looking forward to begin working with you and your staff,

Bernardo Garza

On Mon, Sep 25, 2017 at 10:52 AM, Sean Donahoe <sd@marstel-day.com> wrote:

> Hi Terri and Bernardo,
>
> We are excited that Marstel-Day was selected to support the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on this important work for the National Bison Range Complex. I am the

proposed project manager for Marstel-Day for this contract and our team is looking forward to getting started. Erika Wettergreen who is cc'ed on this email is our designated lead for facilitation service tasks, and I'll be overseeing the project and leading the NEPA analysis support tasks. Both Erika and Elizabeth Powell will be providing general support to the project, as well as other staff identified in our proposal.

To get started, I wanted to coordinate with you all to see when you'd like to have the initial kick-off meeting for the project. Let me know what days/times work best for you and we can set up the initial conference call.

We understand much has already been done on the project, so if there are any documents or meeting notes that would be helpful for us to review prior to the kick-off meeting, feel free to email them to me and I'll distribute them to the team.

We look forward to meeting you and assisting on this important project! Sean

_____

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From: matthew_mccollister@fws.gov
To: Bernardo Garza
Subject: Fwd: [BULK] National Bison Range Complex CCPs Public Scoping Period
Date: Thursday, October 5, 2017 7:33:20 AM

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this was in the NBR scoping inbox
---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Gale Decker** <gdecker@lakemt.gov>
Date: Mon, Oct 2, 2017 at 10:29 AM
Subject: RE: [BULK] National Bison Range Complex CCPs Public Scoping Period
To: "Scoping NBR, FW6" <scoping_nbr@fws.gov>
Cc: Lake County Commissioners <lakecommissioners@lakemt.gov>

Good morning Bernado,

Thank you for the comment schedule; we are looking for a cooperator schedule and a copy of the signed MOU that we signed and returned.

Thanks ,

Gale Decker

Lake County Commissioner

From: bernardo_garza@fws.gov [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov] **On Behalf Of** Scoping NBR, FW6
Sent: Wednesday, September 27, 2017 9:55 AM
To: FW6 Scoping Pablo Ninepipe
Subject: [BULK] National Bison Range Complex CCPs Public Scoping Period
Importance: Low

Good morning,

You are receiving this message via email because you requested to be included in the mailing list for the planning process for the units of the National Bison Range Complex, which include: National Bison Range, Lost Trail National Wildlife Refuge, Ninepipe National Wildlife Refuge, Pablo National Wildlife Refuge, Northwest Montana Wetland Management District – Kalispell County, and Northwest Montana Wetland Management District – Lake County.

Thank you for your interest in the future of these units of the National Wildlife Refuge System and the planning process.

The ongoing public scoping period will end soon as we want to be able to review all comments received and use that information to move forward with the planning process. If you have already submitted your comments we want to thank you for your interest and to let you know that we value and consider your input as extremely important to the success of the planning process and the overall management of the National Bison Range Complex.

If you would like to provide further comments during the public scoping period we ask that you send it to us by September 30, 2017. Furthermore, we invite you to spread the word about the planning process and the end of the public scoping period among your colleagues, friends, and any other person that you believe might be interested in the management of the National Bison Range Complex.

For comments regarding the National Bison Range, please send them to:

scoping_nbr@fws.gov

For comments regarding Lost Trail National Wildlife Refuge, Ninepipe National Wildlife Refuge, Pablo National Wildlife Refuge, Northwest Montana Wetland Management District – Kalispell County, and Northwest Montana Wetland Management District – Lake County please send them to:

scoping_pablo_ninepipe@fws.gov

For further information regarding the National Bison Range Complex planning effort we invite you to visit the NBRC planning website at:

https://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/refuges/nbrc.php

For general information on the units that make up the National Bison Range Complex we invite you to visit the following websites:

https://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/refuges/nbrc.php

https://www.fws.gov/refuge/lost_trail/

https://www.fws.gov/refuge/pablo/

https://www.fws.gov/refuge/nine-pipe/

https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Northwest_Montana_Lake_County_WMD/

https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Northwest_Montana_Flathead_County_WMD/

Periodically we will develop Planning Updates that will be sent to you as we reach important milestones in the planning process.

Thank you,

Planning Team

National Bison Range Complex

From:	Garza, Bernardo
Bcc:	Sean Donahoe; Elizabeth Powell; Erika Wettergreen; Dawn Johnson; Kari Morehouse; Vanessa Fields; Laura King; McCollister, Matthew; Kelly Hogan; Linda Moeder; Jeff King; Kevin Shinn; Angela Eaton
Subject:	Yesterday"s Kick-Off Teleconference Follow Up
Date:	Friday, October 6, 2017 11:03:51 AM

Planning colleagues,

Good morning.

First of all let me tell you that I am very pleased with the results of yesterday's teleconference and with the kicking off of our working relationship on the comprehensive conservation plans for all the units of the National Bison Range Complex.

One of the issues raised during yesterday's teleconference was that of the means or ways to readily and efficiently transfer files and data between the many players of this planning effort throughout the country.

This issue is not only of paramount importance to the success our planning efforts, but also to comply with security measures instituted by the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Department of Interior to avoid network breaches and loss of sensitive data.

Thus, earlier today, I met with this region's IT Chief to discuss this issue and I'm glad to share good news with you.

While our agency is not allowed to use the vast majority of data-sharing platforms and websites available to companies and the general public (including Share Point, and Box.com), the Service can use a relatively new file-sharing platform called FILESHARE.

Therefore, I will endeavor to learn how to use FILESHARE and set up access for all of you to use and be able to share files, data, and documents in an efficient and safe way.

Stay tuned.

Wishing you a great weekend…

Bernardo

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Jeff King; Kevin Shinn; Vanessa Fields; Bernie Petersen
Cc:	Kelly Hogan; McCollister, Matthew
Bcc:	Laura King
Subject:	Fwd: NBR CCP comments
Date:	Wednesday, October 11, 2017 9:49:52 AM

Good morning everyone,

I want to give you an update on recent "events" in the RO related to the NBRC CCPs so everyone can be informed.

A few weeks ago CSKT requested that we provide them a copy of all the comments received during the scoping period(s) - the one directly after and related to the Jan. 2017 NOI, as well as those received after the subsequent NOI was published in May 2017. That information was already provided to the CSKT.

This week we received two FOIA requests for the same exact information. So we are in the process of assembling the response to those two FOIA requests.

Matthew consulted with our regional FOIA expert (Stacey Cummins) on the appropriate response to the two FOIAs. Stacey provided the following information:

Based on DOJ's information on FOIA's Improvement Act of 2016 (please review the appropriate information provided below) we are **required and directed** to post in a publicly accessible electronic format those records that have been requested at least three times (the so called "Rule of 3").

Therefore, in order for us to comply with the FOIA Improvement Act, we will work with the RO's EA webmaster to post the said information in the NBRC Planning website as expediently as possible so the public has access to it.

Hope you are doing well.

Bernardo

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **McCollister, Matthew** <matthew_mccollister@fws.gov>
Date: Wed, Oct 11, 2017 at 9:15 AM
Subject: Fwd: NBR CCP comments
To: Bernardo Garza <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>, Kelly Hogan <kelly_hogan@fws.gov>

DOJ interpretation of FOIA is below

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Cummins, Stacey** <stacey_cummins@fws.gov>
Date: Wed, Oct 11, 2017 at 9:04 AM
Subject: NBR CCP comments
To: Matthew McCollister <matthew_mccollister@fws.gov>

Cc: Cathey Willis <cathey_willis@fws.gov>

Matthew-
I've included Cathy Willis on this email and will let her know what we are working on when she gets in.

Per our conversation, here is the link to DOJ's summary of the FOIA Improvement Act of 2016: https://www.justice.gov/oip/oip-summary-foia-improvement-act-2016

In regard to the public comments in response to the NOI, here is what is specific to FOIA:

Proactive Disclosures:

The "Rule of 3" is Codified for Frequently Requested Records:

- Agencies are now required to "make available for public inspection in an electronic format," records "that have been requested 3 or more times."

This Act also amended the Federal Records Act:

Proactive Disclosures through Records Management

The *FOIA Improvement Act of 2016 a*mends Section 3102 of the Federal Records Act, 44 U.S.C. § 3102, to include a requirement that agencies establish "procedures for identifying records of general interest or use to the public that are appropriate for public disclosure, and for posting such records in a publicly accessible electronic format."

If you have any questions, please let me or Cathy know. Thanks!

Stacey Cummins
FOIA Coordinator/Records Manager
USFWS Mountain Prairie Region
134 Union Blvd.
Lakewood, CO 80228
303-236-4473

EMAIL BEST PRACTICES:

OFFICIAL RECORDS: Emails relating to agency business or responsibilities that explain, justify, or document an action or decision you authored or are required to take are official records.
1 ***MAKE*** an **electronic recordkeeping copy** (searchable/OCR pdf capturing sender/recipient names and transmission dates).
2 ***SAVE*** according to your **office file plan** (per series it is filed with).
3 ***DELETE*** from your emails within **180 days** ***(Except*** for Senior Executives …their emails are permanent records).
4 ***DO NOT*** mix **official business** and **personal business** in the same email/email thread.

--
Matthew McCollister
Wildlife Biologist
Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge
Lewistown, MT

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: NBR CCP comments
Date: Wednesday, October 11, 2017 10:29:47 AM

Bernardo-

Thank you for the update and summary - I very much appreciate it.

I was aware of one of the FOIA requests this week (the one from William Reffalt) - can you update me on the other one?

I do have some questions about these, but it is just for my education, so I can wait until I am in the RO next week and maybe we spend some of our time chatting about this a bit?

Thanks!

On Wed, Oct 11, 2017 at 9:49 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Good morning everyone,
>
> I want to give you an update on recent "events" in the RO related to the NBRC CCPs so everyone can be informed.
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> Bernardo
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Date: Wed, Oct 11, 2017 at 9:15 AM
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If you have any questions, please let me or Cathy know. Thanks!

Stacey Cummins
FOIA Coordinator/Records Manager
USFWS Mountain Prairie Region
134 Union Blvd.
Lakewood, CO 80228
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Matthew McCollister
Wildlife Biologist
Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge
Lewistown, MT

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Bernardo Garza
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Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

Purposes, Vision & Goals Workshop

Reference Handout

I Introduction

This handout will provide you with important background material for the Purposes, Vision, and Goals Workshop. The mission and goals of the National Wildlife Refuge System as well as the purposes of the units of the National Bison Range Complex (Complex) are all summarized below. The handout also defines vision and goal statements and provides examples from other refuges. During the workshop you will be asked to consider the qualities and attributes of the refuge, refine management issues, and develop draft vision and goal statements.

In summary, the Comprehensive Conservation Plans (CCP) for the units of the Complex will:

- Define a vision for the Complex and its units
- Provide preferred plans to guide management decisions
- Outline goals, objectives and strategies to achieve the common vision and goals and the purposes of each of the units of the Complex
- Provide other agencies and the public with an understanding of the management strategies to be implemented throughout the Complex
- Describe the desired future condition of the Complex and of each of its units

II Background: *Legislation and Designation*

The mission and goals of the National Wildlife Refuge System, as outlined in the 1997 NWRS Improvement Act and the purposes of each one of the units of the Complex will inform the development of the vision and goals.

A. 1997 National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act

- **National Wildlife Refuge System's Mission:**
  To administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.

- **National Wildlife Refuge System's Goals:**
  1. To achieve refuge purpose(s) and further the System mission
  2. Conserve, restore, and enhance threatened and endangered species in their natural ecosystems
  3. Perpetuate the migratory bird, interjurisdictional fish and marine mammal populations
  4. Preserve a natural diversity and abundance of refuge flora and fauna
  5. Conserve and restore, where appropriate, representative ecosystems of the United States, including ecological processes characteristic of those ecosystems.
  6. Foster an understanding and appreciation of fish, wildlife and plant ecology and their conservation by providing the public with safe, high-quality, and compatible wildlife-dependent public use.

- **Management Hierarchy**
  Fulfilling the Refuge System Mission is the first managerial priority. The Act also states that *compatible wildlife dependent recreational uses* are legitimate and appropriate general public uses of the Refuge System. These six uses (hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, photography, environmental education, and interpretation) are to receive enhanced consideration, in planning and management, over all other general public uses of the Refuge System.

B. Purposes for the Establishment of each of the Units of the Complex

National Bison Range

Established by Public law 60-136 from unallotted lands within the Flathead Indian Reservation, Montana for bison presented to the United States by the American Bison Society. Since that time, the refuge has played an important role in national bison conservation efforts. Executive Order 3596 (Dec. 22, 1921) also reserved the area as a refuge for migratory birds.

Lost Trail National Wildlife Refuge

Lost Trail was established by Administrative Order under the authorities of the Migratory Bird Conservation Act, the Fish and Wildlife Act, the Refuge Recreation Act, the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, and the Endangered Species Act. The purposes of the refuge are for use as an inviolate sanctuary, or for any other management purpose, for migratory birds; for the development, advancement, management, conservation, and protection of fish and wildlife resources; for the incidental fish and wildlife-oriented recreational development, the protection of natural resources, the conservation of endangered species or threatened species; and for the conservation and enhancement of fish and wildlife. Parts of the refuge are mitigative properties in lieu of losses to Flathead WPA from operations of Kerr Dam. The purpose of those parts is to protect and maintain wetland habitat for migratory birds, other animals, and plants.

Ninepipe National Wildlife Refuge

Established in 1921. Lands within this refuge's boundary were first withdrawn in 1910 for an irrigation reservoir as part of the Flathead Irrigation Project. Executive Order 3503 established this refuge on this withdrawal, subject to reservoir uses. The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes requested the establishment of Ninepipe NWR and the refuge is located on tribal Trust lands. The Tribes manage the fishery resources in the Ninepipe Reservoir. The refuge is an important breeding and staging area for a large portion of the Flathead Valley Canada goose population, as well as for colonies of western grebe, double-crested cormorant, and great blue herons, and for a variety of ducks, and numerous species of other marsh and water birds. The Tribes manage the fishery resources in the reservoir.

Northwest Montana Wetland Management District – Flathead County

Established in the 1960s to manage lands purchased under the authorities of the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act to protect wetland and grassland habitat that is critical to our nation's waterfowl population. Major objectives include wetland preservation, waterfowl and wildlife production, and maintenance of breeding grounds for migratory birds. The district also provides a northern staging area and habitat for migration. This district manages five waterfowl production in the Flathead Valley of Montana.

Northwest Montana Wetland Management District – Lake County

Established in the 1960s to manage lands purchased under the authorities of the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act to protect wetland and grassland habitat that is critical to our nation's waterfowl population. Major objectives include wetland preservation, waterfowl and wildlife production, and maintenance of breeding grounds for migratory birds. The district also provides a northern staging area and habitat for migration. This district manages nine waterfowl production areas and approximately 6,300 acres of conservation easements within the Flathead Indian Reservation in the Mission Valley of Montana.

Pablo National Wildlife Refuge

Established in 1921. Lands within this refuge's boundary were first withdrawn in 1910 for an irrigation reservoir as part of the Flathead Irrigation Project. Executive Order 3503 established this refuge on this withdrawal, subject to reservoir uses. The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes requested the establishment of Pablo NWR and the refuge is located on tribal Trust lands. The Tribes manage the fishery resources in the Ninepipe Reservoir. Today, the refuge is an important area for the reintroduction of trumpeter swans to the Mission Valley, as well as for a variety of ducks, and numerous species of other marsh and water birds. The Tribes manage the fishery resources in the reservoir.

III Workshop Responsibilities: *Defining Qualities and Issues - Developing Vision and Goals*

The Purposes, Vision, and Goals Workshop will focus on defining what are the qualities and issues of the planning area and generating a vision statement and a set of management goals for the CCPs:

A. Qualities/Significance: *Attributes of a unit of the Refuge System that build upon the station's purpose and legislation. What characteristics and features of the refuge make it special and worthy of refuge status.*

Examples (Souris River Loop Refuges):

- *Critical flyway* – The Souris River Loop refuges are located in the Central flyway to provide critical migratory and breeding habitat.

- *Diverse plant communities* – A highly diverse and comprehensive collection of North Dakota plant communities exist within the three refuges.

B. Issues: *Management concerns that need to be addressed during the planning process of a unit of the Refuge System. Issues generally follow the same topics as goals, and delve more specifically into management opportunities and challenges.*

Examples (Souris River Loop Refuges):

- *Vegetation Management* - The encroachment of woody vegetation into the native grasslands is degrading prairie habitat for certain migratory bird species.

- *Public Use* – How can the refuge enhance consideration of the priority uses without jeopardizing resources?

C. Vision Statement: *A compelling, future-oriented expression of what the Complex and its units will be, or what the Service hopes to achieve, based primarily upon the Refuge System mission and the purposes of the units of the Complex*

The vision statement is the synthesis of a station's purpose, the Refuge System mission and goals, and other biological, legal, and social concerns in which the station has a role. The statement should explain the purpose of the Service's planning efforts. It is important that the vision statement refers specifically to the Complex and highlights the unique characteristics of the units of the Complex. The most effective vision statements are concise; they are generally only 3 to 4 sentences long.

Consider the following variables when drafting a vision statement:

What are the refuge's natural resources?	How will visitors experience the refuge?
What will the refuge be like in the future?	How will the Service successfully manage the refuge?

***Vision Statement Examples*:**

- *Lower Suwannee NWR (Chiefland, FL):*

  The watershed and estuary of the Lower Suwannee National Wildlife Refuge contain valuable water resources and fish and wildlife habitat. The refuge will be managed for the conservation of fish and wildlife and their habitat, with special emphasis on the protection and restoration of wetland and upland communities. Educational, research, and wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities will be available, insofar as they are compatible with refuge health and preservation. Management will partner with local, state, and federal agencies, community organizations, and individuals to ensure the protection and conservation of the vast Suwannee River ecosystem for current and future generations.

- *Souris Loop Refuges - Des Lacs, Upper Souris and J. Clark Salyer (North Dakota)*

  From Paleo-Indians on the tails of the Ice Age; to the Assiniboine and Chippewa, early fur trappers, explorers, and naturalists; eminent bison herds and astoundingly abundant birdlife; fires stretching for miles to revitalize treeless prairie; determined homesteaders and vanquished farms of the Dust Bowl era…

  The Souris River basin figures prominently in the cultural and natural history of mid-continent North American's plains and prairies. Three National Wildlife Refuges of the Souris River "Loop" – Des Lacs, Upper Souris, and J. Clark Salyer – will conserve much of the ecology and natural character of the northern plains region while helping sustain populations of migratory birds and other wildlife native to the landscape. The refuges will create a sense of awe and wonder by providing an array of wildlife-dependent recreational and educational experiences that enhance visitor awareness of the splendid natural and cultural heritage of the northern plains. Functioning as integral parts of the ecosystems and human communities to which they belong, the Souris River Loop refuges will seek collaborative partnerships to attain common goals. A diverse and passionate refuge workforce will rely on sound science to understand and restore or emulate natural processes essential to the integrity and perpetuation of major biological communities with which the refuges are entrusted.

- *Long Lake NWR (North Dakota)*

  The echo of the Sandhill cranes through the rolling prairie hills of Long Lake NWR invites today's visitors to follow in the footsteps of the Plains Indians. The Refuge lies along the west central boundary of the prairie pothole region where the Missouri Coteau meets the Coteau Slope. Here an abundance of migratory birds and other wildlife flourish in the native mixed-grass prairie and a mosaic of wetlands. The mixed hues and textures of wildflowers, grasses, mudflats and water please the eye and soothe the soul. Refuge stewards work collaboratively to understand, restore, enhance and protect biological communities. Expanded wildlife dependent recreation and environmental education opportunities foster a greater understanding of the Refuge's resources and the mission of the Refuge System.

- *Lacreek NWR (South Dakota)*

  Lacreek NWR's wetland resources create a sanctuary within the semi-arid Great Plains landscape. The Refuge provides a great diversity of uses for wildlife and humans alike. Refuge stewards manage hydrology to reflect natural conditions and restore native plant communities of the Lake Creek Valley and the adjacent sandhills for migratory birds and other native wildlife. Visitors learn about grasslands, wetlands, and sandhill ecosystems and enjoy wildlife-dependent recreation. Ongoing cooperation with partners and the public fosters appreciation and builds support for the Refuge's biological and cultural assets.

- *Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR Complex (Colorado)*

  As the sun rises, bison thunder across the prairie, red-tailed hawks soar overhead, and the urban bustle begins. Lands once known for their agricultural and industrial uses are being restored on the Nation's premiere urban wildlife refuge, where time moves at nature's pace and wildlife have the right-of-way. Propelled by public and private partnerships, refuge stewards at Rocky Mountain Arsenal, Two Ponds, and Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuges continue to work to repair and regenerate wildlife habitat. These prairie oases nestled within Colorado's Front Range communities welcome visitors from near and far and foster an appreciation for nature. They will connect people with the land for generations to come.

D. Goals: *Descriptive, open-ended, and broad statements of desired future conditions that convey a purpose but do not define measurable units.*

A well-written goal directs work toward achieving the vision and purpose(s) of a Complex or a unit of the Refuge System. The goals will relate to the vision; however, they will represent more specific aims of the Service's management strategies. The goals will outline approaches for managing the refuge's resources and articulate what visitor experiences will be like in the future. It is important that the goal statements are specific to the Complex and its units. The number of goal statements in a CCP generally ranges (but are not limited to) between 6 and 8.

The following are potential goal topics:

- Habitat management
- Wildlife management
- Public Uses/Visitor Services
- Refuge Operations
- Cultural resources
- Research and science
- Partnerships

Biological goals address habitat and wildlife management. In writing biological goals, it is important to include the following four elements:

1. A key **subject** of concern (e.g. a species)
2. The **attribute** of interest for that subject (e.g. population size)
3. A conceptual **target** or condition for the attribute (e.g. period of time)
4. An **action** or effort (e.g. restore)

Examples of Key Elements of Biological Goals

Action	Target	Attribute	Subject
Restore	Maximum	Species diversity	Wildlife species or group
Maintain	Natural	Population levels	-individual species
Perpetuate	Historic range of variability	Productivity	-taxonomic group
Provide	Existing	Population status	-guild
Contribute	Period of time (e.g., 1970s)	Diversity/composition	-community
Aid	Viable	Structure	
Achieve	Health	Integrity	Habitat or Ecosystem
	Optimum (for a given species/group)	Health	-grassland
	High Quality (for a given species/group)	Functioning of processes	-riparian
	Proper (e.g., proper functioning)		-wetland

Tewaukon NWR Biological Goal Example:
Preserve, restore, and enhance the ecological diversity of native flora, other grasslands and wetlands within the tallgrass prairie ecosystem.

Public Use/Visitor Services goals should identify the intended audience and make clear what the Service wants the audience to do, know and feel. In writing public use goals, the following three elements are integral:

1. An **audience** (e.g. visitors)
2. An audience **reaction** (e.g. enjoys)
3. An **object of the reaction** (e.g. wildlife-dependent recreation)

Examples of Key Elements of Public Use Goals

Audience	Reaction	Object of Reaction
Visitors	Know	Basic ecological concepts
Wildlife-dependent recreationists	Understand	Fish and Wildlife
Residents of the local community	Appreciate	The Refuge
People living within 25 miles of the refuge	Enjoy	The Refuge System
Landowners in the watershed	Value	Best management practices
Students	Apply	Ethical outdoor behavior
	Display	Wildlife-dependent recreation
	Support	Refuge management
	Respond	
	Initiate	
	Seek	
	Demonstrate	

Tewaukon NWR Public Use Goal Example:
Provide recreational and educational opportunities for persons of all abilities to learn about and enjoy tallgrass prairie wetland ecosystems, the fish and wildlife found there, and the history of the Refuge in a safe and compatible manner.

Examples of Goals from other CCPs

Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR

Habitat Management
Use an adaptive management framework to conserve, restore, and enhance the eco-logical integrity of Front Range prairie communities, including wetlands, grasslands, native shrubs, and trees.

Wildlife Management
Balance and preserve wildlife species of concern through active management.

Visitor Services
Foster the public's appreciation of natural resources and provide inclusive, high-quality, wildlife-dependent recreation, education, and interpretation.

Communications and Outreach
Through effective communication and innovative technology, engage the public and stakeholders to help them better understand the importance of natural resources, operations, and history at the refuge complex so that they are inspired to take part in and support management and restoration efforts.

Partnerships
Seek and foster strong partnerships to support research and management, enhance wildlife-dependent recreation, and promote an appreciation of nature.

Cultural Resources
Protect artifacts and interpret the archeological, agricultural, military, and industrial histories of the refuge complex and the story of its restoration in order to connect visitors and the community to the area's past.

Research and Science
Use science and promote research to advance the understanding of natural resource functions and management within the refuge complex and beyond.

Infrastructure and Operations
Effectively use money, staff, partners, volunteers, and equipment to restore and manage refuge complex habitats, conduct programs, and improve and maintain all necessary infrastructure.

Access and Transportation
Support the improvement of suitable access to the refuges, develop sustainable transportation options, and provide more connections within the refuge complex.

Souris River Loop Refuges

Ecology
Provide the array of biotic communities present in the Souris River Basin in the mid 1800's by restoring aspects of, or emulating, to the greatest extent possible, the dynamic processes (for example, grazing, fire and drought) under which these communities evolved. The major communities include: drift prairie, sand hills prairie, prairie slopes, woody drains, riparian woodlands, aspen oak woodlands, seeded herbaceous cover, riverine marshes, lakes, prairie ponds, wet meadows, riparian.

Cultural Resources
The refuge will preserve prehistoric, Native American and historic cultural resources.

Research and Science
The refuge will serve as a demonstration area for innovative natural resource management using sound science and applied research to advance the understanding of natural resource function and management within the Northern Great Plains.

Public Use, Education, and Interpretation
The refuge will develop public appreciation for the National Wildlife Refuge System through an understanding of the Souris River Loop biological communities and cultural resources by providing appropriate and compatible recreational, educational, and interpretive opportunities.

REFUGE OPERATIONS
The Souris River Loop refuges will efficiently utilize funding, staffing, partnerships and volunteer programs for the benefit of all natural resources, the National Wildlife Refuge System, and present and future generations.

PARTNERSHIPS
The Refuge will work with others on issues of mutual interest including resource conservation & education, compatible public use, wildlife-related research and infrastructure.

Medicine Lake NWR Complex

Habitat and Wildlife Management
Conserve, restore, and enhance the ecological diversity of grasslands and wetlands of the glaciated mixed-grass prairie to support healthy populations of native wildlife with an emphasis on migratory birds.

Endangered, Threatened, and Rare Species Goal
Contribute to the preservation and restoration of endangered, threatened, rare, and unique plants and wildlife that occur or have historically occurred in the refuge complex.

Wilderness Goal
Conserve the wilderness quality and associated natural processes of the 11,360-acre Medicine Lake Wilderness Area.

Public Use & Educational Goal
Visitors enjoy wildlife-dependent recreation and find opportunities to expand their knowledge and appreciation of the mixed-grass prairie and the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Refuge Operations
Through effective communication and innovation, the Medicine Lake NWR Complex efficiently uses staff, partnerships, volunteers, and funding in support of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Partnerships
Partners join with the Medicine Lake NWR Complex to support research, accomplish habitat conservation, and foster awareness and appreciation of the mixed-grass prairie.

Cultural Resources
Preserve and value the cultural resources and history of Medicine Lake NWR Complex to connect staff, visitors, and the community to the area's past.

Research
Through science, monitoring, and applied research advance the understanding of natural resources and management within the Medicine Lake NWR Complex.

Long Lake NWR Complex

Habitat and Wildlife Management
Preserve, restore, and enhance the ecological diversity of the mixed grass prairie ecosystem (including wetlands, grasslands, and native trees and shrubs) for migratory birds with an emphasis on waterfowl and other grassland and wetland-dependent species.

Public Use & Education
Visitors of all abilities experience lands of the Long Lake NWR Complex in a safe environment, while increasing their knowledge and appreciation of the mixed grass prairie ecosystem, wildlife compatible recreation and the mission of the Refuge System.

Research & Science
Long Lake NWR Complex uses sound science, monitoring, and applied research to advance the understanding of natural resource functions and management within the mixed grass prairie pothole ecosystem.

Cultural Resources
The cultural resources and history of the Long Lake NWR Complex are identified, valued, and preserved, and connect refuge staff, visitors, and the community to the area's past.

Refuge Operations
Through effective communication and innovative technology, the Long Lake NWR Complex secures and efficiently utilizes funding, staffing, partnerships and volunteer programs for the benefit of all natural resources in support of the Refuge System mission.

Partnerships
A wide range of partners join with the Long Lake NWR Complex to support research and management, promote awareness, and foster appreciation of the mixed grass prairie pothole ecosystem.

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Vanessa Fields
Subject:	Draft Agenda and Handout for Workshop
Date:	Thursday, October 12, 2017 1:31:15 PM
Attachments:	NBRC Purposes Vision and Goals Wkshp.docx NBRC_Purposes_Vision_Goals_Handout.docx

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I'm attaching here draft agenda and handout documents for the purposes, vision and goals workshop.

I put these together after reviewing various similar documents for other CCPs and incorporating elements that seem more suitable for the NBRC CCPs.

Take a look and lets discuss these drafts when we talk tomorrow morning.

Hope your medical appointment was good.

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
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National Bison Range Complex

Comprehensive Conservation Plans

Purposes, Vision, and Goals Workshop

Date: November 7, 2017

Place: Red Lion Inn Hotel, Polson, Montana

Workshop Purposes

- Revisit and clarify the purposes for which the units of the National Bison Range Complex (Complex) were established
- Develop working list of Qualities and review Issues raised during scoping period
- Collaboratively generate a Vision Statement that is congruent with the Service's mission and values and the purposes of the units of the Complex
- Collaboratively develop a set of Goals that will assist in attaining the Vision

8:30 am Welcome, personal introductions, review agenda, logistics and workshop purposes

8:45 am Review Service's and Refuge System Missions, and Purposes for each unit of the Complex

9:15 am Group Discussion: What are the qualities that make the Complex/planning area special and unique?

9:45 am Group Discussion: Review (and update as needed) list of issues raised during scoping process

10:15 am SHORT BREAK

10:30 am Introduction to and Development of a Vision Statement

- Define a vision statement and review model statements
- Discuss/vote on process for generating vision statement
- Develop draft vision statement
  - Break into Small Groups – Each Group Creates a Draft Vision Statement
  - Small Groups Present Draft Vision Statements
  - Vote: Whole Group Provides Feedback and Selects Draft Vision Statement to use as a Base for Further Development
    - What did you like about the vision statement chosen? Are there definite "keeper phrases"?
    - What important ideas from other statements should also be included?
- Refine draft Vision Statement and check if statement meets requirements

12:30 pm LUNCH BREAK

1:30 pm Introduction to Goals

- Define goals, brainstorm list of necessary goals to develop, *and process for generating draft goals*

2:00 pm Break into Small Groups to Develop Draft Goals

- Small groups are assigned by duties/expertise to develop goals for specific topics

3:15 pm Small Groups Present Draft Goals

3:45 pm Refinement of Draft Goals

- Whole group comments on goals. Finalize most goals; get input for any future revisions

4:45 pm Recap and Next Steps

- Products from this workshop
- Where do we go from here?

5:00 pm Adjourn Workshop

United States Department of the Interior
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Mountain-Prairie Region

IN REPLY REFER TO:
FWS/R6/NWRS/EVS
VS 1.2
Mail Stop 60130

MAILING ADDRESS:
Post Office Box 25486
Denver Federal Center
Denver, Colorado 80225-0486

STREET LOCATION:
134 Union Blvd.
Lakewood, Colorado 80228-1807

JUL 0 8 2011

Memorandum

To: Refuge Supervisor for Montana, Utah, and Wyoming

Through: Chief, Division of Education and Visitor Services Sheri Fetterman

From: Outdoor Recreation Planner, Helena, MT Sheri Fetterman for Shannon Heath

Subject: National Bison Range Visitor Services Requirements Evaluation Update

On July 1, 2010, I visited the National Bison Range for the purpose of conducting an abbreviated Visitor Services Requirements Evaluation and updating the report that was done in 2004. The attached updated evaluation report should be helpful to Refuge visitor services staff as they enter the upcoming Comprehensive Conservation Planning process.

Pat Jamieson and I reviewed the visitor facilities on the Range in the morning of July 1 and Pat, Laura King, and I spent the afternoon going through the 2004 report and noting where updates were needed.

In the attached report, updates are shown in blue.

Attachment

cc (w/attachment):
Dean Rundle
Jeff King

VISITOR SERVICES REQUIREMENTS EVALUATION UPDATE
NATIONAL BISON RANGE
July 1, 2010

Summary

From June 17th through the 19th, 2002, Dee Emmons and I conducted a Visitor Services Requirements Evaluation at the National Bison Range. We appreciate the time Dave Wiseman and Pat Jamieson were willing to commit to this effort. This evaluation was conducted to determine the degree to which the Refuge's visitor services program is meeting the Visitor Services Requirements and to determine how best to set priorities to fulfill the requirements in the future. This evaluation serves as an excellent tool for communicating priority needs of the Refuge visitor services program to both the Refuge staff and Regional Office staff. As a result, when additional funding becomes available for these programs, it will be used effectively.

It is very apparent that visitor services are a priority at this Refuge. A great deal of effort on the part of all staff members has gone into providing quality wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities and courteous customer service. The local community, both Tribal and non-tribal, recognize the value of this protected area and visit often. Refuge staff have conducted considerable outreach to the surrounding area in an effort to promote this positive image. All of these efforts will ensure that the visiting public continue to associate the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service with a high quality recreational experience.

Overall, the Refuge is meeting many of the individual Visitor Services Requirement elements. Providing universal accessibility is one of the primary areas that the Refuge staff need to now focus some effort.

Following is a summary of primary findings and recommendations resulting from this evaluation.

On July 1, 2010, I met with Pat Jamieson in the morning to review Range facilities, and later in the day with both Pat and Laura King to review the attached report. This meeting resulted in the updated information that will appear in blue throughout the report.

Requirement 1. Develop a Visitor Services Plan

- **Visitor Services Plan** - No plan currently exists.
  Action: A Visitor Services Plan will be completed as a step-down plan to the Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP). The CCP is scheduled to start in FY2011. This evaluation should be helpful to Refuge staff in completing the Refuge Visitor Services Plan.

Requirement 2. Welcome and Orient Visitors

- **Entrance Signs** - The entrance sign at the main entrance is new and does not need replacement. The location (across the road from the main entrance) is not optimum, but no other alternatives are available due to highway permit issues and a confusion of other signs in the vicinity.

  Action:
  - *Recommend adding a footer board to the existing entrance sign with an arrow pointing toward the entrance.* **Note: this action was completed in Summer 2003**
  - *Replace faded logo.*

- **Kiosks** - The orientation kiosk is located appropriately at the visitor center parking lot. Some of the information on the kiosk panels is outdated and there are some mistakes.

  Action: Recommend updating this kiosk with new panels. Some information that should be included on new panels: refuge orientation, dos and don'ts, where to hike and where not to, safety concerns, and visitor center hours. This is in the 5-year plan for Visitor Facility Enhancement projects.

- **Boundary Signs** - no issues, no action needed

- **Directional Signs** - Most directional signs on and off the Refuge are well placed. Following are additional directional signs needed to help the visitor get to the Refuge and to destinations on the Refuge or suggestions for better placement of existing signs.

  Actions:
  Off-Refuge:
  - *The initial directional sign for visitors approaching from the south is located about 150 feet prior to the turn-off from Highway 93 to 200. There should be an additional sign preceding this one to give sufficient warning of the turn.*
  - *A sign is needed on Highway 200 giving mileage to the next turn.*

- *A "mileage to Refuge" sign is needed on Highway 212.*

On Refuge:

- *Move the directional sign for the "West Loop" to a position prior to visitor's point of decision. Completed by YCC mid-summer 2010*
- *Signs are needed on both the east and west side of the turn off to direct visitors to ~~the display pasture and~~ the walk-in fishing access from the auto tour route. The display pasture is no longer a visitor attraction, because the Refuge staff no longer put bison in this pasture. Refuge staff now put some bison in the West Loop Area for visitor viewing.*
- *Signs are needed for visitors traveling in either direction on the display pasture loop to discourage them from entering the Refuge residential area. Some signage has been installed, but it is not completely effective at keeping visitors out of the staff residential area. Recommend installing a gate or additional signage to stop visitor travel between the day-use area and the fishing access area, since this route takes them through the Refuge residential area.*
- *These signs must all be similar in design and color, and produced per the Service Sign Manual. The same substrate should be used for all.*

- **Regulatory Information** - Regulations appear in the general leaflet and on three individual signs along the auto tour route. Refuge staff were expecting to receive a moveable "Bison are Dangerous" sign to be placed wherever bison are congregating. This sign never materialized.

Actions:

- *Replace three wood-routed regulations signs with aluminum signs and use both upper and lower case letters in text instead of all upper case letters. This will improve readability. This action was completed, but unfortunately, the signs must already be updated, because there is a "no firearms" statement on each sign which contradicts new rules allowing possession of firearms on NWRS lands.*
- *Replace wood-routed sign at the start of Red Sleep Mountain Drive that says, "REMAIN AT YOUR VEHICLE AT ALL TIMES . . ." with aluminum signs, and use both upper and lower case letters in text instead of all upper case letters.*
- *Develop moveable sign - "Bison are dangerous stay in your vehicle"*
- *Develop a regulatory panel for the orientation kiosk at the visitor center.*
- *Alert visitors to look for the "Bison are Dangerous" signs as they travel through the Refuge. Note this in both the general brochure and on an orientation kiosk panel.*
- *On sign located near entrance, delete radio station information.*

- **Facility Maintenance** - The visitor center is clean, well-maintained, and gives a positive first impression. Visitor center rest rooms are only open during the center's hours of operation. Rest rooms in the day use area are open to the

public as long as the Refuge is open. Following are some recommended actions for further improvement.

Actions:

- *Rest rooms - the entrance to the accessible stall is not wide enough; it must be a minimum of 32 " wide at the narrowest point. The soap dispenser in the women's rest room should be moved to be accessible for both sinks. Water pipes under the sinks must be covered to avoid burning the legs of individuals in wheelchairs.*

  Assuming the building is expanded or replaced in the near future, the rest rooms must be designed to meet the minimum requirements under ~~UFAS~~. Architectural Barriers Act Standards (ABAAS).

- *The access route from the parking area to the visitor center door is not fully accessible because a portion of the route has too great of a slope. One potential solution is to physically separate the route such that neither wheel chairs nor baby strollers will roll off to the side.*

- **Roads and Parking** - public use roads are graded twice per year (more if weather dictates) and magnesium chloride or calcium chloride is effectively used for dust control. The auto tour route is closed in the winter, during extreme fire conditions, the week before round-up, and during round-up. A cautionary note about roads being icy is included in a mail-out message, ~~the radio message~~, the phone message, and a computer message.

  Action:

  - *Include any cautionary notes about road conditions in the general brochure and on one of the orientation kiosk panels.*
  - *Designated (by accessible parking sign) accessible parking is needed (or needs to be upgraded) at:*
    - *the Bitterroot Trail head ~~adjacent to~~ the accessible ~~rest rooms~~;*
    - *the Glacial Lake Missoula pull-out;*
    - *the rest rooms located above the Glacial Lake Missoula pull-out;*
    - *the Nature Trail head; and*
    - *the accessible rest rooms in the Day Use Area.*
  - *The access aisle associated with one of the two accessible parking spaces in the visitor center lot needs a curb ramp where the aisle abuts the sidewalk.*
  - *Access aisles for all accessible parking must be marked on the ground to discourage people from parking on them.*

- **General Leaflet** - Refuge staff received funding in 2002 to produce a new general leaflet per the Service Graphic Standards. Pat Jamieson is working on this. The current brochure is a combination general leaflet, auto tour guide, and wildlife observation guide; it is an attractive brochure, but does not comply with

the Service Graphic Standards. The general brochure is available in Spanish, French, German, and Japanese. No large print or audio versions have been created. Refuge staff also produce a brochure in-house that is used for mailing and off-Refuge distribution sites.

Action:

- *Complete new Refuge general leaflet per the Service Graphic Standards.*
- *Work with EVS staff to convert all Refuge publications to comply with the Standards.*
- *Create large print version of general brochure.*

- **Service Logo** - The logo appears on the entrance, the visitor center, and on vehicles.

Action:

- *Include the logo on the orientation kiosk, preferably on interpretive panels when they are replaced.*

- **Visitor Hours** - Visitor hours are posted on a sign at the entrance gate and on the orientation kiosk. Hours change throughout the seasons to accommodate peak visitation.

Action:

- *Include visitor hours in new general brochure.*

- **Customer Service** - Visitor center staff have received training in dealing with the public. All maintain a professional appearance with correct uniform components. Staff are friendly and well-informed. Tribal involvement is no longer applicable at this time.

The public can reach a live body via phone during business hours. At other times, they get a friendly and current automated message. The public can also leave a phone message and expect a response within the week.

- **Visitor Information Beyond Refuge Boundaries** - Refuge publications are stocked at any chamber of commerce within 150 miles, bed and breakfast inns, and motels. Refuge information is posted on all local web sites. Local businesses are eager to advertise the Refuge in the hope of keeping visitors in the area longer. Refuge staff produce a tri-fold brochure in-house for off-site distribution.

Action:

- *Enlist EVS assistance to convert in-house produced brochure to tear sheet that complies with Service Graphic Standards.*
- *Once the general brochure has been updated, Refuge staff should work with EVS staff to produce a rack card for a lower cost outreach publication*

option.

- **Visitor Feedback** - Visitors are encouraged to sign a log book at the front desk; they often include comments that are typically positive. Staff at the front desk also record any comments received from visitors.

Requirement 3. Provide Quality Hunting Opportunities
There is no hunting program at the National Bison Range.

Requirement 4. Provide Quality Fishing Opportunities

- **Step-down Fishing Plan and program documentation** - A fishing plan will be completed as a step-down plan to the Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP).

- **Fishing Program Management** - There are two fishing access sites on the Refuge; one is on Mission Creek and the other is on the Jocko River. There is also an accessible fishing bridge locate along the Nature Trail. The State Fishing Regulations apply on the Refuge. A State -Tribal agreement also affects the fishing program on the Refuge. Anglers must possess a State/Tribal Use and Conservation Permit with a fishing stamp in order to fish on the Refuge.

  No records are kept regarding angler information. Occasional license checks are adequate law enforcement since angler pressure is low.

  The fishing program is evaluated informally through visits with anglers, checking licenses, and staff meeting discussions.

- **Special Conditions** - Fishing on the Jocko River is catch and release only for non-Tribal members. Tribal members can keep anything except bull trout.

- **Staff needed to manage the program** - Angler pressure is so low that there is currently enough staff to manage the program.

- **Signs** - A regulatory sign is posted at the beginning of the trail leading to the Mission Creek fishing access site. At the Jocko fishing access site, there is a single panel kiosk with some posters about rattlesnake danger and noxious weeds as well as a no camping sign. There is also a regulatory sign at the Jocko site. Further signage is needed in association with each of these sites.

  Actions:
  - *Directional signs needed for Jocko River fishing access:*
    - *Need signs alerting anglers coming from either direction on Highway 200 that they are approaching a fishing access site.*

- *Once the angler has reached the parking area, there needs to be a sign directing them to the river.*
- *Move boundary sign ("unauthorized access . . .") away from access entrance to avoid suggesting the area is closed. If a boundary sign is necessary there, replace the existing sign with one that just says, "Boundary."*
- *Reinstall entrance sign.*

- *Directional signs needed for Mission Creek fishing access:*
  - *Need signs alerting anglers approaching this access point from either direction.*
  - *Currently have a one-sided sign at the access point that says, "Fishing Access - Walk-in only." This sign should be replaced with a two-sided sign. When access to this area is changed, this sign will need to be angled appropriately so that it can be seen by approaching anglers.*

- **Roads, Parking Areas, and Trails -** A dirt parking area is delineated with bollards at the Jocko River access site. Parking for the Mission Creek walk-in access is located at the nearby YCC education area. Trails exist for both fishing access sites; none are maintained, but don't require maintenance for the amount of use received. The fishing bridge along the Nature Trail provides an accessible fishing opportunity along Mission Creek. There is an orientation sign at the trailhead for the Nature Trail. Accessible rest rooms are available at the day use area near both the Mission Creek and Nature Trail fishing opportunities. There are pit toilets at the Jocko River access site.

  Actions:
  Nature Trail improvements needed:
  - *Develop an accessible parking area for the trail that leads to the accessible fishing bridge.*
  - *There must also be an accessible route from the accessible parking area to the asphalt trail.*
  - *The lip at the transition from trail to fishing deck is too great; it should be less than 1/4 inch. If the change in level is 1/4 to ½ inch, the transition must be beveled with a slope no greater than 1:2. Changes in level greater than ½ inch where the slope is more than 5% must be treated as a curb ramp, the running slope of which cannot exceed 1:12; Pat will look into providing a beveled wood ramp at this location to improve access.*
  - *There are some dips in the asphalt trail that must be filled to insure safe accessibility. Some work has been done, but the entire trail needs repairs.*
  - *The Nature Trail trailhead sign must include a note about the presence of the accessible fishing bridge. This sign is very old and worn; it needs to be replaced.*

- **Publications** - Refuge staff have produced a tear sheet (available at the visitor center) on the fishing opportunity at Mission Creek. State fishing regulations are available at the visitor center and at the local store.

Actions:

- *Enlist EVS assistance to produce a fishing tear sheet that complies with the Service Graphic Standards.*
- *Make State/Tribal fishing regulations available at the Jocko River access site, since anglers there may not otherwise get this information. Install covered brochure box for this purpose.*
- *Inform visitors about accessible fishing bridge in both the general and fishing publications.*
- *All fishing opportunities should be noted in the general brochure and on the orientation kiosk.*

- **Safety** - Encounters with mountain lions and/or bison are potential hazards on Mission Creek while rattlesnakes and poison ivy can be of concern at the Jocko River access. Warnings of these hazards are posted at each site.

- **Commercial Guides** - none

- **Special Events** - No fishing events are hosted on the Refuge.

Requirement 5. Provide Quality Wildlife Observation and Wildlife Photography Opportunities

- **Facilities** - Four auto tour routes are available:
  - Red Sleep Mountain Drive - 19 miles one-way;
  - West Loop - 1 mile one-way drive near visitor center;
  - Prairie Drive - the last 1 ½ -mile leg of the Red Sleep Mountain Drive. Traffic on this stretch is two-way; and
  - Winter Drive - An approximately 6-mile stretch at the end of the Red Sleep Mountain Drive is open to visitors during the winter. This stretch is two-way traffic during this season only.

  There are no designated pull-outs along any of the routes, but the roads are all wide enough for vehicles to pass. Actually, numerous pull-outs exist, but they are not designated.

  There are two walking trails (neither is universally accessible) that may be reached via the auto tour route. Both trails have vista points. Both are closed if bison are nearby.
  - Bitterroot Trail - 1/4 mile long; one sign identifies the trail and one misplaced regulatory sign asks visitors to remain in their vehicles (this sign will be moved). ~~There are accessible rest rooms and parking at the trail head, but~~ The trail is not accessible. ~~A~~ a portion of this trail could be made accessible without much effort.
  - Highpoint Trail - this two track is not accessible. Two pit toilets are maintained at the end of the trail.

Actions:

- *Make necessary alterations to make a portion of the Bitterroot Trail accessible, so that all visitors have the opportunity to enjoy a vista point. This may require re-routing the initial segment of the trail to achieve the acceptable slope.*
- *Remove pit toilets at end of Highpoint Trail, because two new accessible pit toilets have been installed at the trailhead.*
- *Designate/mark with signage the pull-outs along auto tour routes.*

Nature Trail - The day use area has a number of trails; some are accessible. There is an accessible asphalt route to a fishing deck on Mission Creek and an accessible asphalt loop trail around a pond. This is a good wildlife viewing area.

Actions:

- *Provide accessible parking and an accessible route from the parking area to the beginning of the accessible trails;*
- *Clear juniper branches that are encroaching on the trail. Juniper branch clearance from the trail is now done regularly.*
- *Fill three to four dips in the asphalt on the accessible trail; this has been done, but periodic maintenance is needed.*
- *The lip at the transition from trail to fishing deck is too great; it should be less than 1/4 inch. If the change in level is 1/4 to ½ inch the transition must be beveled with a slope no greater than 1:2. Changes in level greater than ½ inch where the slope is more than 5% must be treated as a curb ramp, the running slope of which cannot exceed 1:12;*
- *One of the benches along the accessible trail is not accessible; it must have a back. There is now a bench with a back.*
- *There should be a rest area every 200 ~~to 300~~ feet; recommend a pull-out with a bench;*
- *The map panel should be revised and moved to the beginning of the trail where the log section now sits;*
- *~~Where the Discovery Trail (not accessible) intersects the accessible trail, there should be a color-coded symbol that corresponds to the map panel to help orient visitors; and~~*
- *Suggest placing a sign at either end of the Day Use area, near the speed limit signs that are already posted, to alert drivers to slow down for pedestrians.*
- *Recommend developing a 3-sided kiosk for the Day Use area. Potential topics for interpretation include the National Wildlife Refuge System and Conservation Heroes.*

Grassland Trail - This is a compacted gravel fines loop trail adjacent to the visitor center that was designed to be accessible. This is a great option for visitors who have very little time and for school groups coming to the Refuge for a program. Due to several factors, this trail is not fully accessible. Trail materials are such

that winter freeze-thaw action fluffs up the surface. The slope on a couple of sections of the trail exceeds requirements for accessibility, but the section from the beginning of the trail out to the overlook is accessible. Vegetation can grow up in the trail creating obstacles for wheel chairs and strollers.

Actions:

- *The trail must be compacted in the spring;*
- *Trail maintenance must include controlling vegetation that encroaches into the trail;*
- *An interpretive panel should be produced for placement at the beginning of the trail; this sign should provide a map of the trail and describe the distance and slopes for various portions of the trail.*

The bison corrals used during roundup include an observation deck. This is a wonderful facility that allows 3,000 + visitors (over the course of 2 days) to watch all the annual bison roundup activities. Currently, this activity is not fully accessible and it should be.

Actions:

- *Provide accessible parking and an accessible route between the parking area, the viewing deck, the lunch area, and the rest rooms.*

Information - A Mammal list and Youngster's Wildlife Guide are available to visitors. Both are useful guides, but neither meets the Service Graphic Standards. The current general brochure includes a lot of information on Refuge wildlife and habitats. Attractive interpretive panels along the Nature Trail provide information to enhance wildlife watching in that area. An interpretive panel near the trail head for the High Point Trail covers glaciers and historic Lake Missoula. Two dioramas in the visitor center show the visitor some of the species that might be seen on the Refuge. The movie shown in the visitor center also shows Refuge wildlife.

Actions:

- *Produce wildlife list (combined bird, mammal, amphibian/reptile) in standard format.*
- *Produce Youngster's Wildlife Guide in standard format or wait for children's brochure being developed by EVS.*
- *Produce auto tour brochure or tear sheet in standard format; include wildlife watching skills in this brochure.*
- *Produce two interpretive panels for the Grassland Trail –one to introduce the Palouse Prairie ecosystem and to characterize the trail, and one to interpret the view at the overlook.*
- *Contract for professionally produced audio tape tour or podcast of auto tour.*

Refuge staff who are out on the Refuge call front desk staff to report any wildlife

sightings, so that these can be passed along to visitors who will be traveling the auto tour.

- **Events** - National Bison Range staff organize events that support wildlife observation and photography around Migratory Bird Day and the annual roundup. Also, Red Sleep Mountain Drive opening, beginning bird walk on the Nature Trail, advanced birding, and photography walk.

  Action: When planning events, Refuge staff should make every effort to make those events accessible to people of all abilities.

- **Specialized Tools** - Spotting scopes are set up during events and whenever Refuge officers on patrol find wildlife viewing opportunities for visitors.

- **Habitat Enhancements** - The pond around which the Nature Trail winds was once a gravel pit that Refuge staff now keep full of water through the use of an artesian well.

- **Conflicting Use** - Sometimes photographers and researchers get in each other's way and sometimes photographers get too close to wildlife. Conflicts have not been significant or frequent enough to change management of these uses.

- **Evaluation** - Visitors are asked to sign a log book in the visitor center and verbal comments are recorded by Refuge staff.

Requirement 6. Develop and Implement a Quality Environmental Education Program

- **Program Development** - Summary: The National Bison Range has a well-established environmental education (EE) program. Pat Jamieson is the designated EE coordinator; she has a background in wildlife biology and recreation, and she has taken an EE methods class. Most EE programs given by Refuge staff are on-site rather than in classrooms. The programs include a variety of topics, based on the needs of the requesting teacher. Teacher training workshops are offered several times a year to familiarize teachers with the Refuge and its natural resources; OPI (Office of Public Instruction, State of Montana) credit is offered for the workshops. Good communication has been established with area schools.

  Actions:
  - *Because the EE program has been going on at the Refuge for a number of years, it would be beneficial to review the topics, messages, and objectives of the overall program. This review would help ensure that the EE program remains focused on the areas that are important to wildlife*

conservation at the Refuge and that the EE program is fully using the natural resources of the Refuge. Revisions to the topics, messages, and general objectives should be made as needed. Local teachers should be involved in this review. Pat tries to introduce new programs and workshops (e.g. Project Wild, Pollinators). She plans to address climate change next.

- *Currently, volunteers and local partners are involved in giving EE presentations, such as during part of a workshop, but they are not actively involved in workshop or program planning. Whenever possible, more active partnerships should be encouraged for the EE program. This would allow a more cohesive approach to environmental education in the area and encourage the development of activities that show relationships among local conservation groups.*
- *Teachers are highly interested in the Refuge, and have been involved in developing individual activities for use at the Refuge. The EE program would be further improved if the Refuge staff could work more closely with the area teachers to develop topics, messages, and objectives that meet the needs of both the schools and the Refuge.*
- *Address non-traditional and under-served audiences (e.g., ~~American Indians and~~ people with disabilities) whenever possible. In the interim, one way to accommodate people with disabilities is to ask ahead of time if the audience for a particular program will include any students with special needs; this will allow staff to adapt the program as needed ahead of time. Also, show staff at underserved schools the education standards that will be supported by Refuge programs.*

- **Curricula Development** - There is an extensive set of reference materials and activities for teachers to use. The materials are arranged into topic folders that teachers can refer to during field trips. Many of the activities are ones developed by teachers at workshops on the Refuge.

Actions:

- *The topic folders are useful for teachers; as time allows, they could be reviewed and reevaluated based on an assessment of the program's overall topics, messages, and general objectives described above. Information on the National Wildlife Refuge System and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) should be incorporated, and Montana education standards should be used to update the materials to ensure that the needs of the area schools are met. Pat suggests updating this material and getting it on the web where it will get more use.*
- *To ensure that EE programs are accessible, Refuge staff should ask teachers and group leaders about any special needs students in their group prior to the field trip and modify activities appropriately.*
- *Pat would like to write an EE curriculum for the Refuge. She would need consistent messages.*

- **Education Materials -** The Refuge staff has an EE library, and they have limited field study equipment, including dip nets, bug boxes, and one microscope.

  Actions:
  - *The staff would like to put together a bison teaching trunk; this would be a valuable education tool. As possible, the field study equipment should also be expanded as appropriate to meet the needs of the EE program. This project would be a good candidate for EVS funding; Refuge staff is encouraged to submit a proposal at the next opportunity.*

- **Environmental Education Facilities and Site Development -** The day use area is used for outdoor EE programs. There is also a more primitive site with a pole ~~tent~~ shelter that gets used by University of Idaho students every year.

  Actions:
  - *The developed day use area is not yet fully accessible.* ~~*The pavilion needs to be made accessible and the site also needs an accessible table. It is recommended that the accessible table be located near one of the accessible rest rooms. There needs to be an access route from accessible parking to all accessible facilities as well as accessible routes between all facilities. The more primitive site with a pole tent shelter is not accessible and doesn't need to be so long as the day use area is made fully accessible and is used for programs attended by students with disabilities.*~~
    Recommend developing a Visitor Facility Enhancement Project to make the day use area facilities accessible. The following need to be made accessible:
    - *At least 50 percent of the picnic tables;*
    - *The pavilion;*
    - *Parking for rest rooms;*
    - *Parking for the pavilion;*
    - *Parking for the nature trail;*
    - *Parking for the fishing deck access; and*
    - *Access to each public use facility from parking and/or other facilities.*

- **Outreach Programs -** Refuge staff already participates in outreach opportunities including notifying teachers of ~~satellite broadcasts~~ webcasts, putting EE information on the Refuge website, participating in special events, and trying to get feedback on programs. The Refuge staff participates in the Refuge System birthday celebrations, International Migratory Bird Day, the National Bison Range birthday, and more. These efforts should continue.

  Action: Refuge staff should let local media outlets know when environmental education outreach events will occur and try to get coverage. Refuge staff now alerts local media outlets when environmental education outreach events are planned.

Requirement 7. Interpret Key Resources and Issues

- **Key Resource Issues/Interpretive Themes -** Key resource issues and themes interpreted on this Refuge are bison biology and management and palouse prairie ecology.

  Action: Refuge staff should include the Refuge System message in their interpretive products and presentations. *Refuge staff would also like to include wildlife ethics and wildlife viewing tips in their interpretive products.*

- **Personal Services Interpretation -** Front desk staff give an introductory message before showing the Refuge video in the visitor center auditorium. They are also available for informal interpretation as requested by visitors. This type of contact is much appreciated by visitors.

  Action: Whenever possible, Refuge staff should determine special visitor needs prior to their visit.

- **Visitor Center/Information Area -** "The visitor center consists of an information/reception counter, retail sales outlet for the Glacier Natural History Association, auditorium and numerous interpretive exhibits. The visitor center was originally designed and constructed to handle 50 visitors per hour. On peak visitation days during the summer, 300 visitors per hour routinely pass through the visitor center. The auditorium was designed and constructed to seat 20 visitors. It was modified to seat 40 visitors; however, on peak visitation days, it is common to find visitors standing in the back of the room and in the aisles. Additional space is desperately needed." (excerpted from Public Use Minimum Requirements Evaluation conducted in July 1995)

  Little has changed since the above paragraph was written except that visitation has increased. On a positive note, the space in the visitor center and auditorium is adequate to accommodate wheelchairs (disregarding difficulties on peak visitation days).

  Action: The visitor center and auditorium must be expanded to accommodate visitor demand. This has not been updated in SAMMS. At the time of this abbreviated review, the Tribe was responsible for maintaining SAMMS.

- **Visitor Center/Information Area Exhibits -** The current professionally designed exhibits are informative, but quite old. Most of the exhibits are not universally accessible. Some are too high for people in wheelchairs or children to appreciate. Small print size, lighting, and color contrast make reading of exhibit text difficult in many cases.

  Action: The recommended action in 1995 still applies - "The following exhibits in

the visitor center need to be replaced or modified to meet accessibility standards: relief map, stereoscope, computer station. The weasel diorama also needs to be lowered. Many other exhibits contain small text which needs to be enlarged, and all exhibits should be audio-described. The orientation film shown in the auditorium should be open captioned (this has been done). After a decade of use, many other exhibits are worn and need to be repaired. I recommend that the Refuge staff work with the Division of Education and Visitor Services and an exhibit/interpretive consultant to develop an accessibility transition plan and to make recommendations for updating the overall exhibitry in the visitor center."

- **Printed Materials** - The general brochure addresses some key resource issues. Refuge staff produce an informal leaflet specifically for distribution during round-up.

  Actions:
  - *The round-up brochure is a good candidate for conversion to a tear sheet designed in the standard format.*
  - *Refuge staff would like to produce tear sheets on bison, palouse prairie, wildlife ethics, and Tribal resources.*
  - *Produce brochures in large print or provide large print versions.*

- **Kiosks and Wayside Exhibits** - The orientation kiosk has two panels that interpret key resources. Several wayside exhibits along the Nature Trail interpret key resources. At the Highway 93 pull-out, there are wood-routed signs about bison and a standardized entrance sign. Refuge staff plan to place plant identification plates and interpretive panels along the Grassland Trail.

  Actions:
  - *Update orientation kiosk panels (see comments under Requirement #2).*
  - *Develop interpretive panels and plant identification plates for the Grassland Trail*
  - ~~*Develop interpretive panels*~~ *Install permanent kiosk for the Jocko River fishing access that cover the topics of bull trout biology and restoration of the river channel. Make sure these are readable from the vehicle.*
  - ~~Develop a Refuge orientation panel for the Highway 93 pullout area~~

- **Audio/Visual Programs** - Refuge staff contracted out the production of a new video about the Refuge to replace the one that has been shown to visitors in the auditorium for years. The new one ~~will be~~/is open captioned. ~~Printed text is available for visitors with hearing impairments.~~

- **Portable Exhibits** - Refuge staff purchased a Downing display backdrop which is used for outreach events such as the annual Montana Education Association conference and teacher workshops. The display materials are tailored to the specific need.

- **Evaluation** - Visitors are asked to sign a log book in the visitor center and verbal comments are recorded by Refuge staff.

Requirement 8. Manage for Appropriate Recreational Opportunities

- **Evaluation of Existing Recreational Activities** - The priority public uses that are available on this Refuge include fishing, wildlife observation and photography, environmental education, and interpretation. Additional recreational activities that currently occur on the Refuge include:

  - Through a Special Use Permit, limited primitive camping is allowed north of the walk-in fishing access to Mission Creek in support of environmental education activities. These activities are usually limited to high school and college aged students and scouts participating in environmental education that is taking place on the Refuge.
  - Annual trail ride - this is a staff-led wildlife watching activity that allows a small group of people to access areas of the Refuge not viewed from Refuge tour routes. This activity has been determined to not be compatible with Refuge purposes and has been discontinued.
  - Weddings and family reunions. It is doubtful that these activities will continue after the CCP process.
  - Cultural Day with Kicking Horse Job Corps - an annual event held under a special use permit.

  Actions:
  - *All uses will have to be reviewed for appropriateness and compatibility during the CCP process.*

- **Signs**
  Action: Replace all signs referring to "picnic area," since picnicking is not an appropriate use. This area should be called the "day use area" or "environmental education area."

- ***Facilities*** - At the time of this review, the day use area had 16 rest rooms, two of which were accessible. Access routes and parking in this area were not accessible, nor were the pavilion or the tables. Refuge staff were planning to upgrade this site in the Summer of 2002 by providing 8 rest rooms (4 accessible) as well as accessible parking and access routes. **Note: Refuge staff reported that the rest rooms and associated access routes have been installed. There may be 15 rest rooms now. Pat says this quantity of rest rooms is needed for large school groups and for round up.**

  Action:
  - *Upgrade all day use area facilities to be fully accessible.*
  - *Refuge staff should carefully consider whether even 8 rest rooms are*

~~necessary considering the maintenance they require. One or two accessible rest rooms should be plenty.~~

- *A baseball backstop in the day use area must be removed. This was removed during Summer 2010.*

Requirement 9. Communicate Key Issues with Off-site Audiences

- **Outreach Plan -** Refuge staff may develop an outreach plan as a step-down of the Visitor Services Plan.

  Action: If the Refuge staff choose to develop an outreach plan, it must do the following:

  - *Incorporate Service and Refuge system messages.*
  - *Identify issues important to the Refuge, the community, and other. audiences*
  - *Identify outreach goals.*
  - *Identify level of community awareness and prevailing attitude toward refuge-related issues.*
  - *Identify audiences most affected by prevalent refuge-related issues and actions. Include Congress, corporate sponsors, communities, conservation groups, and communications media.*
  - *Identify community decision-makers and/or opinion leaders.*
  - *Determine the Refuge's key wildlife and habitat conservation messages and tailor them to each audience identified above.*
  - *Identify tools needed to communicate outreach messages (i.e., news releases, portable exhibits, newsletters, editorials, B-roll footage, home pages, etc).*
  - *Identify how to conduct outreach for people with disabilities.*
  - *Identify strategies for conducting outreach (i.e., open houses, programs, off-site/on-site events, newspaper articles, etc.).*
  - *Explain how and when the plan will be evaluated.*

  During this review, Refuge staff brainstormed an extensive list of issues important to the Refuge and it's audiences. We also discussed the level of community awareness toward these Refuge-related issues. We identified the audiences that are most affected by the issues, and determined what the Refuge's key wildlife and habitat conservation messages are. This was a good exercise to do in preparation for the CCP process.

  Action: Refuge staff should work toward producing all printed outreach materials in compliance with the Service Graphic Standards.

Requirement 10. Build Volunteer Programs and Partnerships with Refuge Support Groups

- **Overall Volunteer Program Evaluation -** The Refuge has an established volunteer program. At the beginning of each year, the Refuge staff does an assessment to determine the size and scope of the volunteer program for that year. Because of staffing limitations, the Refuge staff generally has more people interested in volunteering for the Refuge than they can supervise. At the time of this abbreviated review, the Tribe was hiring people to do a lot of the work that used to be done by volunteers.

  Action:
  - *While the volunteer needs of the National Bison Range are being met, the satellite refuges could use more volunteer help. As time and staffing permits, Refuge staff should develop positions for the satellite refuges and recruit volunteers. Lost Trail and Swan River NWRs are no longer under the jurisdiction of the Bison Range, but Pablo and Ninepipes NWRs still are, so this action is still valid for those properties.*
  - *When the budget permits, suggest hiring a volunteer coordinator.*
  - *Use volunteers for interpretive programs and birding at Ninepipes NWR; there is now a volunteer trailer pad located there.*

  Volunteer plan - A formal volunteer plan has not been developed, but the Refuge staff conduct an informal needs assessment each year.

  Action: The year-by-year evaluation is useful, but the Refuge complex would also benefit from a longer term and more comprehensive volunteer plan. This plan should include what training the staff needs, facility needs, and volunteer training needs for the entire complex.

  Volunteer orientation and training - Training and orientation are provided to all volunteers.

  Safety considerations and guidelines - Volunteers are trained in safety.

  Action: There is no work space designated to volunteers – there is no space available at this time. When/if space becomes available, a work area should be designated for volunteers.

  Benefits for volunteers - When possible, volunteers are provided with housing on the Refuge. The bunkhouse will also be available and universally accessible. There are also 2 trailer sites at Ninepipe NWR.

  Action: As funds become available, it is recommended that several trailer pads be constructed on the National Bison Range, and/or on the satellite refuges. This will expand potential volunteers to those who travel the country in their RV's.

  Volunteer funds - Refuge staff works with Glacier Natural History Association aid

funds to support the volunteer program.

Supervision - Pat Jamieson is responsible for the volunteer program. Pat has worked extensively with volunteers.

Volunteer management - Volunteers are always invited to the staff meetings and included as part of the staff. Volunteers are given meaningful duties and specific responsibilities.

Schedule for program evaluation and adjustment - The Refuge staff do not evaluate the volunteer program at the end of the season.

Action: At the end of the volunteer season, staff should discuss what worked and what did not work for volunteers to continue program improvement.

- **Community Partners -** The Refuge works with a number of partners, some through formal agreement and others more informally. Community partners include the Glacier Natural History Association, ~~the Lower Flathead Valley Community Foundation, Salish and Kootenai College, and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.~~

  ~~*Action: These partnerships do not currently have Memorandum of Understandings or Agreements. For the partnerships that are long term and more active, it is recommended that a Memorandum of Understanding or Agreement to formally recognize the relationship be developed.*~~

- **Cooperating Associations** – The cooperating association is the Glacier Natural History Association. Items sold are educational and are supportive of the Refuge System. Accountability, bookkeeping, and reporting regulations are clear to the cooperating association. Profits are used for the volunteer program, brochure publications, and other visitor services needs.

  Action: The sales area would benefit from an increase in size – this would allow the association to expand its selection of items. When/if space becomes available, the sales area should be expanded.

  Action: The higher bookshelves are too high to be universally accessible. The books on the higher shelves need to be relocated to an accessible location.

  Action: The Refuge staff has been provided basic ethics and conduct training but still needs training as it relates to working with partners. This training should be provided when funding allows.

FUTURE PRODUCTS AND ACTIVITIES RECOMMENDED FOR COMPLETION TO MEET THE VISITOR SERVICES REQUIREMENTS

Following is a list of products and activities that should be completed at the National Bison Range to meet the appropriate level of the Visitor Services Requirements. The list is generally in recommended priority order, and it is not all inclusive. Safety issues and changes needed to meet accessibility requirements are the highest priority. We recognize that these products and activities will be completed over time as funding and staff is available. The Project Leader should enter the items below into ~~RONS and MMS.~~ **FBMS?**

- Develop a Visitor Services Plan as a step-down plan to the Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP).
- Develop long term Volunteer Plan for the National Bison Range and satellite refuges.
- Add a footer board to the existing entrance sign with an arrow pointing toward the entrance. **Completed summer 2003 Replace faded logo.**
- Install directional signs as recommended under Requirement 2 of this evaluation.
- Update the orientation kiosk with new panels. Develop one orientation and two seasonal interpretive panels. One of the seasonal panels should focus on regulations ($16,000).
- Develop new Refuge general brochure in compliance with Service Graphic Standards with funding provided by RO.
- Convert all Refuge publications to standard format.
- Once the general brochure has been updated, Refuge staff should work with EVS staff to produce a rack card for a lower cost outreach publication option.
- Create large print versions of Refuge publications.
- Replace three wood-routed regulations signs with aluminum signs and use both upper and lower case letters in text instead of all upper case letters. This will improve readability. **Completed Spring 2003** *This action was completed, but unfortunately, the signs must already be updated, because there is a "no firearms" statement on each sign which contradicts new rules allowing possession of firearms on NWRS lands.*
- *Replace wood-routed sign at the start of Red Sleep Mountain Drive that says, "REMAIN AT YOUR VEHICLE AT ALL TIMES . . ." with aluminum signs, and use both upper and lower case letters in text instead of all upper case letters.*

- *Develop moveable sign - "Bison are dangerous stay in your vehicle"*

- Replace all signs referring to "picnic area," since picnicking is not an appropriate use. This area should be called the "day use area" or "environmental education area."

- A baseball backstop in the day use area must be removed.

- Make improvements necessary to achieve full accessibility for the visitor center - accessible route from vehicle to center and improvements to rest rooms (see Requirement #2).

- Some books in the visitor center sales area are displayed too high to be fully accessible. Relocate books to lower shelves.

- Provide accessible parking for the Bitterroot Trail, the Glacial Lake Missoula overlook, rest rooms located above the Glacial Lake Missoula pull-out, the Nature Trail, and the accessible rest rooms in the Day Use Area.

- Make necessary alterations to make a portion of the Bitterroot Trail accessible, so that all visitors have the opportunity to enjoy a vista point.

- Make all changes necessary to make the Nature Trail (and associated fishing deck), the Grassland Trail, the Day Use Area and the bison corrals fully accessible (see Requirement # 4, 5, & 6).

- Replace visitor center exhibits with new exhibits that are up-to-date, attractive, and meet accessibility standards.

- Expand visitor center and auditorium to accommodate visitor demand.

- Develop a wildlife checklist in the Service Graphics Standard.

- Produce two interpretive panels for the Grassland Trail (see Requirement #5).

- Contract for professionally-produced audio tour of the auto tour route.

- Review overall EE program topics, messages, and objectives and revise as needed.

- Enlist local teachers in developing topics, messages, and objectives that meet the needs of both the schools and the Refuge.

- Review and re-evaluate EE topic folders based on assessment of program topics, messages, and objectives. Update material in folders,and get it on the

web.

- Whenever possible encourage more active partnerships for EE program planning.
- Develop bison teaching trunk. The field study equipment should also be expanded as appropriate to meet the needs of the EE program.
- Install directional signs for Jocko River and Mission Creek Fishing access sites (see Requirement #4).
- Develop a kiosk and interpretive panels for the Jocko River fishing access site. Also, reinstall entrance sign.
- When planning events, programs, workshops, or other visitor opportunity, Refuge staff should make every effort to make those events accessible to people of all abilities.
- All uses will have to be reviewed for appropriateness and compatibility during the CCP process.
- When/if space becomes available, a work area should be designated for volunteers.
- As funds become available, it is recommended that several trailer pads be constructed on the National Bison Range, and/or on the satellite refuges. This will expand potential volunteers to those who travel the country in their RV's.
- While the volunteer needs of the National Bison Range are being met, the satellite refuges could use more volunteer help. As time and staffing permits, Refuge staff should develop positions for the satellite refuges and recruit volunteers. Lost Trail and Swan River NWRs are no longer under the jurisdiction of the Bison Range, but Pablo and Ninepipes NWRs still are.
- When the budget permits, suggest hiring a volunteer coordinator.
- Use volunteers for interpretive programs and birding at Ninepipes NWR; there is now a trailer pad located there
- Develop Memorandums of Understanding or Agreement with all partners.

From:	Emmons, Diane
To:	Bernie Petersen; Bernardo Garza; Vanessa Fields; Hogan, Kelly; Jackie Jacobson; Mary Danno; Kevin Shinn
Subject:	NBR Complex Visitor Services - Discussion this week?
Date:	Monday, October 16, 2017 8:32:27 AM
Attachments:	2011 NBR VS Review.pdf

All -

Bernie and I would like to have a brief discussion about the visitor services and outreach program at the National Bison Range Complex later this week (Wed, Thurs, or Fri). We'd like to do this because we won't have the visitor services review completed prior to the November 7th CCP vision and goals meeting. This will be our opportunity to discuss findings from the previous VS review (attached), talk about what we'll be looking at during the upcoming VS review (Week of Nov 13), and have an initial discussion about the direction of visitor services at NBR.

Can you fill out this Doodle Poll (https://doodle.com/poll/8kgcp4cqkfctxewu) to let me know what days and times work best for you?

Thanks,
Dee

~~~~~~

Diane (Dee) Emmons, Chief, Visitor Services and Outreach (VSO)
Region 6, National Wildlife Refuge System, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
303-236-4392 (Office) || 303-503-2418 (Mobile)
~~~~~~

United States Department of the Interior
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Mountain-Prairie Region

IN REPLY REFER TO:
FWS/R6/NWRS/EVS
VS 1.2
Mail Stop 60130

MAILING ADDRESS:
Post Office Box 25486
Denver Federal Center
Denver, Colorado 80225-0486

STREET LOCATION:
134 Union Blvd.
Lakewood, Colorado 80228-1807

JUL 0 8 2011

Memorandum

To: Refuge Supervisor for Montana, Utah, and Wyoming

Through: Chief, Division of Education and Visitor Services Sheri Fetterman

From: Outdoor Recreation Planner, Helena, MT Sheri Fetterman for Shannon Heath

Subject: National Bison Range Visitor Services Requirements Evaluation Update

On July 1, 2010, I visited the National Bison Range for the purpose of conducting an abbreviated Visitor Services Requirements Evaluation and updating the report that was done in 2004. The attached updated evaluation report should be helpful to Refuge visitor services staff as they enter the upcoming Comprehensive Conservation Planning process.

Pat Jamieson and I reviewed the visitor facilities on the Range in the morning of July 1 and Pat, Laura King, and I spent the afternoon going through the 2004 report and noting where updates were needed.

In the attached report, updates are shown in blue.

Attachment

cc (w/attachment):
Dean Rundle
Jeff King

VISITOR SERVICES REQUIREMENTS EVALUATION UPDATE
NATIONAL BISON RANGE
July 1, 2010

Summary

From June 17th through the 19th, 2002, Dee Emmons and I conducted a Visitor Services Requirements Evaluation at the National Bison Range. We appreciate the time Dave Wiseman and Pat Jamieson were willing to commit to this effort. This evaluation was conducted to determine the degree to which the Refuge's visitor services program is meeting the Visitor Services Requirements and to determine how best to set priorities to fulfill the requirements in the future. This evaluation serves as an excellent tool for communicating priority needs of the Refuge visitor services program to both the Refuge staff and Regional Office staff. As a result, when additional funding becomes available for these programs, it will be used effectively.

It is very apparent that visitor services are a priority at this Refuge. A great deal of effort on the part of all staff members has gone into providing quality wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities and courteous customer service. The local community, both Tribal and non-tribal, recognize the value of this protected area and visit often. Refuge staff have conducted considerable outreach to the surrounding area in an effort to promote this positive image. All of these efforts will ensure that the visiting public continue to associate the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service with a high quality recreational experience.

Overall, the Refuge is meeting many of the individual Visitor Services Requirement elements. Providing universal accessibility is one of the primary areas that the Refuge staff need to now focus some effort.

Following is a summary of primary findings and recommendations resulting from this evaluation.

On July 1, 2010, I met with Pat Jamieson in the morning to review Range facilities, and later in the day with both Pat and Laura King to review the attached report. This meeting resulted in the updated information that will appear in blue throughout the report.

Requirement 1. Develop a Visitor Services Plan

- **Visitor Services Plan** - No plan currently exists.
  Action: A Visitor Services Plan will be completed as a step-down plan to the Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP). The CCP is scheduled to start in FY2011. This evaluation should be helpful to Refuge staff in completing the Refuge Visitor Services Plan.

Requirement 2. Welcome and Orient Visitors

- **Entrance Signs** - The entrance sign at the main entrance is new and does not need replacement. The location (across the road from the main entrance) is not optimum, but no other alternatives are available due to highway permit issues and a confusion of other signs in the vicinity.

  Action:
  - *Recommend adding a footer board to the existing entrance sign with an arrow pointing toward the entrance.* **Note: this action was completed in Summer 2003**
  - *Replace faded logo.*

- **Kiosks** - The orientation kiosk is located appropriately at the visitor center parking lot. Some of the information on the kiosk panels is outdated and there are some mistakes.

  Action: Recommend updating this kiosk with new panels. Some information that should be included on new panels: refuge orientation, dos and don'ts, where to hike and where not to, safety concerns, and visitor center hours. This is in the 5-year plan for Visitor Facility Enhancement projects.

- **Boundary Signs** - no issues, no action needed

- **Directional Signs** - Most directional signs on and off the Refuge are well placed. Following are additional directional signs needed to help the visitor get to the Refuge and to destinations on the Refuge or suggestions for better placement of existing signs.

  Actions:
  Off-Refuge:
  - *The initial directional sign for visitors approaching from the south is located about 150 feet prior to the turn-off from Highway 93 to 200. There should be an additional sign preceding this one to give sufficient warning of the turn.*
  - *A sign is needed on Highway 200 giving mileage to the next turn.*

- *A "mileage to Refuge" sign is needed on Highway 212.*

On Refuge:

- *Move the directional sign for the "West Loop" to a position prior to visitor's point of decision. Completed by YCC mid-summer 2010*
- *Signs are needed on both the east and west side of the turn off to direct visitors to ~~the display pasture and~~ the walk-in fishing access from the auto tour route. The display pasture is no longer a visitor attraction, because the Refuge staff no longer put bison in this pasture. Refuge staff now put some bison in the West Loop Area for visitor viewing.*
- *Signs are needed for visitors traveling in either direction on the display pasture loop to discourage them from entering the Refuge residential area. Some signage has been installed, but it is not completely effective at keeping visitors out of the staff residential area. Recommend installing a gate or additional signage to stop visitor travel between the day-use area and the fishing access area, since this route takes them through the Refuge residential area.*
- *These signs must all be similar in design and color, and produced per the Service Sign Manual. The same substrate should be used for all.*

- **Regulatory Information** - Regulations appear in the general leaflet and on three individual signs along the auto tour route. Refuge staff were expecting to receive a moveable "Bison are Dangerous" sign to be placed wherever bison are congregating. This sign never materialized.

Actions:

- *Replace three wood-routed regulations signs with aluminum signs and use both upper and lower case letters in text instead of all upper case letters. This will improve readability. This action was completed, but unfortunately, the signs must already be updated, because there is a "no firearms" statement on each sign which contradicts new rules allowing possession of firearms on NWRS lands.*
- *Replace wood-routed sign at the start of Red Sleep Mountain Drive that says, "REMAIN AT YOUR VEHICLE AT ALL TIMES . . ." with aluminum signs, and use both upper and lower case letters in text instead of all upper case letters.*
- *Develop moveable sign - "Bison are dangerous stay in your vehicle"*
- *Develop a regulatory panel for the orientation kiosk at the visitor center.*
- *Alert visitors to look for the "Bison are Dangerous" signs as they travel through the Refuge. Note this in both the general brochure and on an orientation kiosk panel.*
- *On sign located near entrance, delete radio station information.*

- **Facility Maintenance** - The visitor center is clean, well-maintained, and gives a positive first impression. Visitor center rest rooms are only open during the center's hours of operation. Rest rooms in the day use area are open to the

public as long as the Refuge is open. Following are some recommended actions for further improvement.

Actions:

- *Rest rooms - the entrance to the accessible stall is not wide enough; it must be a minimum of 32 " wide at the narrowest point. The soap dispenser in the women's rest room should be moved to be accessible for both sinks. Water pipes under the sinks must be covered to avoid burning the legs of individuals in wheelchairs.*

  Assuming the building is expanded or replaced in the near future, the rest rooms must be designed to meet the minimum requirements under ~~UFAS~~. Architectural Barriers Act Standards (ABAAS).

- *The access route from the parking area to the visitor center door is not fully accessible because a portion of the route has too great of a slope. One potential solution is to physically separate the route such that neither wheel chairs nor baby strollers will roll off to the side.*

- **Roads and Parking** - public use roads are graded twice per year (more if weather dictates) and magnesium chloride or calcium chloride is effectively used for dust control. The auto tour route is closed in the winter, during extreme fire conditions, the week before round-up, and during round-up. A cautionary note about roads being icy is included in a mail-out message, ~~the radio message~~, the phone message, and a computer message.

  Action:

  - *Include any cautionary notes about road conditions in the general brochure and on one of the orientation kiosk panels.*
  - *Designated (by accessible parking sign) accessible parking is needed (or needs to be upgraded) at:*
    - *the Bitterroot Trail head ~~adjacent to~~ the accessible ~~rest rooms~~;*
    - *the Glacial Lake Missoula pull-out;*
    - *the rest rooms located above the Glacial Lake Missoula pull-out;*
    - *the Nature Trail head; and*
    - *the accessible rest rooms in the Day Use Area.*
  - *The access aisle associated with one of the two accessible parking spaces in the visitor center lot needs a curb ramp where the aisle abuts the sidewalk.*
  - *Access aisles for all accessible parking must be marked on the ground to discourage people from parking on them.*

- **General Leaflet** - Refuge staff received funding in 2002 to produce a new general leaflet per the Service Graphic Standards. Pat Jamieson is working on this. The current brochure is a combination general leaflet, auto tour guide, and wildlife observation guide; it is an attractive brochure, but does not comply with

the Service Graphic Standards. The general brochure is available in Spanish, French, German, and Japanese. No large print or audio versions have been created. Refuge staff also produce a brochure in-house that is used for mailing and off-Refuge distribution sites.

Action:

- *Complete new Refuge general leaflet per the Service Graphic Standards.*
- *Work with EVS staff to convert all Refuge publications to comply with the Standards.*
- *Create large print version of general brochure.*

- **Service Logo** - The logo appears on the entrance, the visitor center, and on vehicles.

Action:

- *Include the logo on the orientation kiosk, preferably on interpretive panels when they are replaced.*

- **Visitor Hours** - Visitor hours are posted on a sign at the entrance gate and on the orientation kiosk. Hours change throughout the seasons to accommodate peak visitation.

Action:

- *Include visitor hours in new general brochure.*

- **Customer Service** - Visitor center staff have received training in dealing with the public. All maintain a professional appearance with correct uniform components. Staff are friendly and well-informed. Tribal involvement is no longer applicable at this time.

The public can reach a live body via phone during business hours. At other times, they get a friendly and current automated message. The public can also leave a phone message and expect a response within the week.

- **Visitor Information Beyond Refuge Boundaries** - Refuge publications are stocked at any chamber of commerce within 150 miles, bed and breakfast inns, and motels. Refuge information is posted on all local web sites. Local businesses are eager to advertise the Refuge in the hope of keeping visitors in the area longer. Refuge staff produce a tri-fold brochure in-house for off-site distribution.

Action:

- *Enlist EVS assistance to convert in-house produced brochure to tear sheet that complies with Service Graphic Standards.*
- *Once the general brochure has been updated, Refuge staff should work with EVS staff to produce a rack card for a lower cost outreach publication*

option.

- **Visitor Feedback** - Visitors are encouraged to sign a log book at the front desk; they often include comments that are typically positive. Staff at the front desk also record any comments received from visitors.

Requirement 3. Provide Quality Hunting Opportunities
There is no hunting program at the National Bison Range.

Requirement 4. Provide Quality Fishing Opportunities

- **Step-down Fishing Plan and program documentation** - A fishing plan will be completed as a step-down plan to the Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP).

- **Fishing Program Management** - There are two fishing access sites on the Refuge; one is on Mission Creek and the other is on the Jocko River. There is also an accessible fishing bridge locate along the Nature Trail. The State Fishing Regulations apply on the Refuge. A State -Tribal agreement also affects the fishing program on the Refuge. Anglers must possess a State/Tribal Use and Conservation Permit with a fishing stamp in order to fish on the Refuge.

  No records are kept regarding angler information. Occasional license checks are adequate law enforcement since angler pressure is low.

  The fishing program is evaluated informally through visits with anglers, checking licenses, and staff meeting discussions.

- **Special Conditions** - Fishing on the Jocko River is catch and release only for non-Tribal members. Tribal members can keep anything except bull trout.

- **Staff needed to manage the program** - Angler pressure is so low that there is currently enough staff to manage the program.

- **Signs** - A regulatory sign is posted at the beginning of the trail leading to the Mission Creek fishing access site. At the Jocko fishing access site, there is a single panel kiosk with some posters about rattlesnake danger and noxious weeds as well as a no camping sign. There is also a regulatory sign at the Jocko site. Further signage is needed in association with each of these sites.

  Actions:
  - *Directional signs needed for Jocko River fishing access:*
    - *Need signs alerting anglers coming from either direction on Highway 200 that they are approaching a fishing access site.*

- *Once the angler has reached the parking area, there needs to be a sign directing them to the river.*
- *Move boundary sign ("unauthorized access . . .") away from access entrance to avoid suggesting the area is closed. If a boundary sign is necessary there, replace the existing sign with one that just says, "Boundary."*
- *Reinstall entrance sign.*

- *Directional signs needed for Mission Creek fishing access:*
  - *Need signs alerting anglers approaching this access point from either direction.*
  - *Currently have a one-sided sign at the access point that says, "Fishing Access - Walk-in only." This sign should be replaced with a two-sided sign. When access to this area is changed, this sign will need to be angled appropriately so that it can be seen by approaching anglers.*

- **Roads, Parking Areas, and Trails -** A dirt parking area is delineated with bollards at the Jocko River access site. Parking for the Mission Creek walk-in access is located at the nearby YCC education area. Trails exist for both fishing access sites; none are maintained, but don't require maintenance for the amount of use received. The fishing bridge along the Nature Trail provides an accessible fishing opportunity along Mission Creek. There is an orientation sign at the trailhead for the Nature Trail. Accessible rest rooms are available at the day use area near both the Mission Creek and Nature Trail fishing opportunities. There are pit toilets at the Jocko River access site.

  Actions:
  Nature Trail improvements needed:
  - *Develop an accessible parking area for the trail that leads to the accessible fishing bridge.*
  - *There must also be an accessible route from the accessible parking area to the asphalt trail.*
  - *The lip at the transition from trail to fishing deck is too great; it should be less than 1/4 inch. If the change in level is 1/4 to ½ inch, the transition must be beveled with a slope no greater than 1:2. Changes in level greater than ½ inch where the slope is more than 5% must be treated as a curb ramp, the running slope of which cannot exceed 1:12; Pat will look into providing a beveled wood ramp at this location to improve access.*
  - *There are some dips in the asphalt trail that must be filled to insure safe accessibility. Some work has been done, but the entire trail needs repairs.*
  - *The Nature Trail trailhead sign must include a note about the presence of the accessible fishing bridge. This sign is very old and worn; it needs to be replaced.*

- **Publications** - Refuge staff have produced a tear sheet (available at the visitor center) on the fishing opportunity at Mission Creek. State fishing regulations are available at the visitor center and at the local store.

Actions:

- *Enlist EVS assistance to produce a fishing tear sheet that complies with the Service Graphic Standards.*
- *Make State/Tribal fishing regulations available at the Jocko River access site, since anglers there may not otherwise get this information. Install covered brochure box for this purpose.*
- *Inform visitors about accessible fishing bridge in both the general and fishing publications.*
- *All fishing opportunities should be noted in the general brochure and on the orientation kiosk.*

- **Safety** - Encounters with mountain lions and/or bison are potential hazards on Mission Creek while rattlesnakes and poison ivy can be of concern at the Jocko River access. Warnings of these hazards are posted at each site.

- **Commercial Guides** - none

- **Special Events** - No fishing events are hosted on the Refuge.

Requirement 5. Provide Quality Wildlife Observation and Wildlife Photography Opportunities

- **Facilities** - Four auto tour routes are available:
  - Red Sleep Mountain Drive - 19 miles one-way;
  - West Loop - 1 mile one-way drive near visitor center;
  - Prairie Drive - the last 1 ½ -mile leg of the Red Sleep Mountain Drive. Traffic on this stretch is two-way; and
  - Winter Drive - An approximately 6-mile stretch at the end of the Red Sleep Mountain Drive is open to visitors during the winter. This stretch is two-way traffic during this season only.

  There are no designated pull-outs along any of the routes, but the roads are all wide enough for vehicles to pass. Actually, numerous pull-outs exist, but they are not designated.

  There are two walking trails (neither is universally accessible) that may be reached via the auto tour route. Both trails have vista points. Both are closed if bison are nearby.
  - Bitterroot Trail - 1/4 mile long; one sign identifies the trail and one misplaced regulatory sign asks visitors to remain in their vehicles (this sign will be moved). ~~There are accessible rest rooms and parking at the trail head, but~~ The trail is not accessible. ~~A~~ a portion of this trail could be made accessible without much effort.
  - Highpoint Trail - this two track is not accessible. Two pit toilets are maintained at the end of the trail.

Actions:

- *Make necessary alterations to make a portion of the Bitterroot Trail accessible, so that all visitors have the opportunity to enjoy a vista point. This may require re-routing the initial segment of the trail to achieve the acceptable slope.*
- *Remove pit toilets at end of Highpoint Trail, because two new accessible pit toilets have been installed at the trailhead.*
- *Designate/mark with signage the pull-outs along auto tour routes.*

Nature Trail - The day use area has a number of trails; some are accessible. There is an accessible asphalt route to a fishing deck on Mission Creek and an accessible asphalt loop trail around a pond. This is a good wildlife viewing area.

Actions:

- *Provide accessible parking and an accessible route from the parking area to the beginning of the accessible trails;*
- *Clear juniper branches that are encroaching on the trail. Juniper branch clearance from the trail is now done regularly.*
- *Fill three to four dips in the asphalt on the accessible trail; this has been done, but periodic maintenance is needed.*
- *The lip at the transition from trail to fishing deck is too great; it should be less than 1/4 inch. If the change in level is 1/4 to ½ inch the transition must be beveled with a slope no greater than 1:2. Changes in level greater than ½ inch where the slope is more than 5% must be treated as a curb ramp, the running slope of which cannot exceed 1:12;*
- *One of the benches along the accessible trail is not accessible; it must have a back. There is now a bench with a back.*
- *There should be a rest area every 200 ~~to 300~~ feet; recommend a pull-out with a bench;*
- *The map panel should be revised and moved to the beginning of the trail where the log section now sits;*
- *~~Where the Discovery Trail (not accessible) intersects the accessible trail, there should be a color-coded symbol that corresponds to the map panel to help orient visitors; and~~*
- *Suggest placing a sign at either end of the Day Use area, near the speed limit signs that are already posted, to alert drivers to slow down for pedestrians.*
- *Recommend developing a 3-sided kiosk for the Day Use area. Potential topics for interpretation include the National Wildlife Refuge System and Conservation Heroes.*

Grassland Trail - This is a compacted gravel fines loop trail adjacent to the visitor center that was designed to be accessible. This is a great option for visitors who have very little time and for school groups coming to the Refuge for a program. Due to several factors, this trail is not fully accessible. Trail materials are such

that winter freeze-thaw action fluffs up the surface. The slope on a couple of sections of the trail exceeds requirements for accessibility, but the section from the beginning of the trail out to the overlook is accessible. Vegetation can grow up in the trail creating obstacles for wheel chairs and strollers.

Actions:

- *The trail must be compacted in the spring;*
- *Trail maintenance must include controlling vegetation that encroaches into the trail;*
- *An interpretive panel should be produced for placement at the beginning of the trail; this sign should provide a map of the trail and describe the distance and slopes for various portions of the trail.*

The bison corrals used during roundup include an observation deck. This is a wonderful facility that allows 3,000 + visitors (over the course of 2 days) to watch all the annual bison roundup activities. Currently, this activity is not fully accessible and it should be.

Actions:

- *Provide accessible parking and an accessible route between the parking area, the viewing deck, the lunch area, and the rest rooms.*

Information - A Mammal list and Youngster's Wildlife Guide are available to visitors. Both are useful guides, but neither meets the Service Graphic Standards. The current general brochure includes a lot of information on Refuge wildlife and habitats. Attractive interpretive panels along the Nature Trail provide information to enhance wildlife watching in that area. An interpretive panel near the trail head for the High Point Trail covers glaciers and historic Lake Missoula. Two dioramas in the visitor center show the visitor some of the species that might be seen on the Refuge. The movie shown in the visitor center also shows Refuge wildlife.

Actions:

- *Produce wildlife list (combined bird, mammal, amphibian/reptile) in standard format.*
- *Produce Youngster's Wildlife Guide in standard format or wait for children's brochure being developed by EVS.*
- *Produce auto tour brochure or tear sheet in standard format; include wildlife watching skills in this brochure.*
- *Produce two interpretive panels for the Grassland Trail –one to introduce the Palouse Prairie ecosystem and to characterize the trail, and one to interpret the view at the overlook.*
- *Contract for professionally produced audio tape tour or podcast of auto tour.*

Refuge staff who are out on the Refuge call front desk staff to report any wildlife

sightings, so that these can be passed along to visitors who will be traveling the auto tour.

- **Events** - National Bison Range staff organize events that support wildlife observation and photography around Migratory Bird Day and the annual roundup. Also, Red Sleep Mountain Drive opening, beginning bird walk on the Nature Trail, advanced birding, and photography walk.

  Action: When planning events, Refuge staff should make every effort to make those events accessible to people of all abilities.

- **Specialized Tools** - Spotting scopes are set up during events and whenever Refuge officers on patrol find wildlife viewing opportunities for visitors.

- **Habitat Enhancements** - The pond around which the Nature Trail winds was once a gravel pit that Refuge staff now keep full of water through the use of an artesian well.

- **Conflicting Use** - Sometimes photographers and researchers get in each other's way and sometimes photographers get too close to wildlife. Conflicts have not been significant or frequent enough to change management of these uses.

- **Evaluation** - Visitors are asked to sign a log book in the visitor center and verbal comments are recorded by Refuge staff.

Requirement 6. Develop and Implement a Quality Environmental Education Program

- **Program Development** - Summary: The National Bison Range has a well-established environmental education (EE) program. Pat Jamieson is the designated EE coordinator; she has a background in wildlife biology and recreation, and she has taken an EE methods class. Most EE programs given by Refuge staff are on-site rather than in classrooms. The programs include a variety of topics, based on the needs of the requesting teacher. Teacher training workshops are offered several times a year to familiarize teachers with the Refuge and its natural resources; OPI (Office of Public Instruction, State of Montana) credit is offered for the workshops. Good communication has been established with area schools.

  Actions:
  - *Because the EE program has been going on at the Refuge for a number of years, it would be beneficial to review the topics, messages, and objectives of the overall program. This review would help ensure that the EE program remains focused on the areas that are important to wildlife*

conservation at the Refuge and that the EE program is fully using the natural resources of the Refuge. Revisions to the topics, messages, and general objectives should be made as needed. Local teachers should be involved in this review. Pat tries to introduce new programs and workshops (e.g. Project Wild, Pollinators). She plans to address climate change next.

- *Currently, volunteers and local partners are involved in giving EE presentations, such as during part of a workshop, but they are not actively involved in workshop or program planning. Whenever possible, more active partnerships should be encouraged for the EE program. This would allow a more cohesive approach to environmental education in the area and encourage the development of activities that show relationships among local conservation groups.*
- *Teachers are highly interested in the Refuge, and have been involved in developing individual activities for use at the Refuge. The EE program would be further improved if the Refuge staff could work more closely with the area teachers to develop topics, messages, and objectives that meet the needs of both the schools and the Refuge.*
- *Address non-traditional and under-served audiences (e.g., ~~American Indians and~~ people with disabilities) whenever possible. In the interim, one way to accommodate people with disabilities is to ask ahead of time if the audience for a particular program will include any students with special needs; this will allow staff to adapt the program as needed ahead of time. Also, show staff at underserved schools the education standards that will be supported by Refuge programs.*

- **Curricula Development** - There is an extensive set of reference materials and activities for teachers to use. The materials are arranged into topic folders that teachers can refer to during field trips. Many of the activities are ones developed by teachers at workshops on the Refuge.

Actions:

- *The topic folders are useful for teachers; as time allows, they could be reviewed and reevaluated based on an assessment of the program's overall topics, messages, and general objectives described above. Information on the National Wildlife Refuge System and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) should be incorporated, and Montana education standards should be used to update the materials to ensure that the needs of the area schools are met. Pat suggests updating this material and getting it on the web where it will get more use.*
- *To ensure that EE programs are accessible, Refuge staff should ask teachers and group leaders about any special needs students in their group prior to the field trip and modify activities appropriately.*
- *Pat would like to write an EE curriculum for the Refuge. She would need consistent messages.*

- **Education Materials -** The Refuge staff has an EE library, and they have limited field study equipment, including dip nets, bug boxes, and one microscope.

  Actions:
  - *The staff would like to put together a bison teaching trunk; this would be a valuable education tool. As possible, the field study equipment should also be expanded as appropriate to meet the needs of the EE program. This project would be a good candidate for EVS funding; Refuge staff is encouraged to submit a proposal at the next opportunity.*

- **Environmental Education Facilities and Site Development -** The day use area is used for outdoor EE programs. There is also a more primitive site with a pole ~~tent~~ shelter that gets used by University of Idaho students every year.

  Actions:
  - *The developed day use area is not yet fully accessible.* ~~*The pavilion needs to be made accessible and the site also needs an accessible table. It is recommended that the accessible table be located near one of the accessible rest rooms. There needs to be an access route from accessible parking to all accessible facilities as well as accessible routes between all facilities. The more primitive site with a pole tent shelter is not accessible and doesn't need to be so long as the day use area is made fully accessible and is used for programs attended by students with disabilities.*~~
    Recommend developing a Visitor Facility Enhancement Project to make the day use area facilities accessible. The following need to be made accessible:
    - *At least 50 percent of the picnic tables;*
    - *The pavilion;*
    - *Parking for rest rooms;*
    - *Parking for the pavilion;*
    - *Parking for the nature trail;*
    - *Parking for the fishing deck access; and*
    - *Access to each public use facility from parking and/or other facilities.*

- **Outreach Programs -** Refuge staff already participates in outreach opportunities including notifying teachers of ~~satellite broadcasts~~ webcasts, putting EE information on the Refuge website, participating in special events, and trying to get feedback on programs. The Refuge staff participates in the Refuge System birthday celebrations, International Migratory Bird Day, the National Bison Range birthday, and more. These efforts should continue.

  Action: Refuge staff should let local media outlets know when environmental education outreach events will occur and try to get coverage. Refuge staff now alerts local media outlets when environmental education outreach events are planned.

Requirement 7. Interpret Key Resources and Issues

- **Key Resource Issues/Interpretive Themes -** Key resource issues and themes interpreted on this Refuge are bison biology and management and palouse prairie ecology.

  Action: Refuge staff should include the Refuge System message in their interpretive products and presentations. *Refuge staff would also like to include wildlife ethics and wildlife viewing tips in their interpretive products.*

- **Personal Services Interpretation -** Front desk staff give an introductory message before showing the Refuge video in the visitor center auditorium. They are also available for informal interpretation as requested by visitors. This type of contact is much appreciated by visitors.

  Action: Whenever possible, Refuge staff should determine special visitor needs prior to their visit.

- **Visitor Center/Information Area -** "The visitor center consists of an information/reception counter, retail sales outlet for the Glacier Natural History Association, auditorium and numerous interpretive exhibits. The visitor center was originally designed and constructed to handle 50 visitors per hour. On peak visitation days during the summer, 300 visitors per hour routinely pass through the visitor center. The auditorium was designed and constructed to seat 20 visitors. It was modified to seat 40 visitors; however, on peak visitation days, it is common to find visitors standing in the back of the room and in the aisles. Additional space is desperately needed." (excerpted from Public Use Minimum Requirements Evaluation conducted in July 1995)

  Little has changed since the above paragraph was written except that visitation has increased. On a positive note, the space in the visitor center and auditorium is adequate to accommodate wheelchairs (disregarding difficulties on peak visitation days).

  Action: The visitor center and auditorium must be expanded to accommodate visitor demand. This has not been updated in SAMMS. At the time of this abbreviated review, the Tribe was responsible for maintaining SAMMS.

- **Visitor Center/Information Area Exhibits -** The current professionally designed exhibits are informative, but quite old. Most of the exhibits are not universally accessible. Some are too high for people in wheelchairs or children to appreciate. Small print size, lighting, and color contrast make reading of exhibit text difficult in many cases.

  Action: The recommended action in 1995 still applies - "The following exhibits in

the visitor center need to be replaced or modified to meet accessibility standards: relief map, stereoscope, computer station. The weasel diorama also needs to be lowered. Many other exhibits contain small text which needs to be enlarged, and all exhibits should be audio-described. The orientation film shown in the auditorium should be open captioned (this has been done). After a decade of use, many other exhibits are worn and need to be repaired. I recommend that the Refuge staff work with the Division of Education and Visitor Services and an exhibit/interpretive consultant to develop an accessibility transition plan and to make recommendations for updating the overall exhibitry in the visitor center."

- **Printed Materials** - The general brochure addresses some key resource issues. Refuge staff produce an informal leaflet specifically for distribution during round-up.

  Actions:
  - *The round-up brochure is a good candidate for conversion to a tear sheet designed in the standard format.*
  - *Refuge staff would like to produce tear sheets on bison, palouse prairie, wildlife ethics, and Tribal resources.*
  - *Produce brochures in large print or provide large print versions.*

- **Kiosks and Wayside Exhibits** - The orientation kiosk has two panels that interpret key resources. Several wayside exhibits along the Nature Trail interpret key resources. At the Highway 93 pull-out, there are wood-routed signs about bison and a standardized entrance sign. Refuge staff plan to place plant identification plates and interpretive panels along the Grassland Trail.

  Actions:
  - *Update orientation kiosk panels (see comments under Requirement #2).*
  - *Develop interpretive panels and plant identification plates for the Grassland Trail*
  - ~~*Develop interpretive panels*~~ *Install permanent kiosk for the Jocko River fishing access that cover the topics of bull trout biology and restoration of the river channel. Make sure these are readable from the vehicle.*
  - ~~Develop a Refuge orientation panel for the Highway 93 pullout area~~

- **Audio/Visual Programs** - Refuge staff contracted out the production of a new video about the Refuge to replace the one that has been shown to visitors in the auditorium for years. The new one ~~will be~~/is open captioned. ~~Printed text is available for visitors with hearing impairments.~~

- **Portable Exhibits** - Refuge staff purchased a Downing display backdrop which is used for outreach events such as the annual Montana Education Association conference and teacher workshops. The display materials are tailored to the specific need.

- **Evaluation** - Visitors are asked to sign a log book in the visitor center and verbal comments are recorded by Refuge staff.

Requirement 8. Manage for Appropriate Recreational Opportunities

- **Evaluation of Existing Recreational Activities** - The priority public uses that are available on this Refuge include fishing, wildlife observation and photography, environmental education, and interpretation. Additional recreational activities that currently occur on the Refuge include:

  - Through a Special Use Permit, limited primitive camping is allowed north of the walk-in fishing access to Mission Creek in support of environmental education activities. These activities are usually limited to high school and college aged students and scouts participating in environmental education that is taking place on the Refuge.
  - Annual trail ride - this is a staff-led wildlife watching activity that allows a small group of people to access areas of the Refuge not viewed from Refuge tour routes. This activity has been determined to not be compatible with Refuge purposes and has been discontinued.
  - Weddings and family reunions. It is doubtful that these activities will continue after the CCP process.
  - Cultural Day with Kicking Horse Job Corps - an annual event held under a special use permit.

  Actions:
  - *All uses will have to be reviewed for appropriateness and compatibility during the CCP process.*

- **Signs**
  Action: Replace all signs referring to "picnic area," since picnicking is not an appropriate use. This area should be called the "day use area" or "environmental education area."

- ***Facilities*** - At the time of this review, the day use area had 16 rest rooms, two of which were accessible. Access routes and parking in this area were not accessible, nor were the pavilion or the tables. Refuge staff were planning to upgrade this site in the Summer of 2002 by providing 8 rest rooms (4 accessible) as well as accessible parking and access routes. **Note: Refuge staff reported that the rest rooms and associated access routes have been installed. There may be 15 rest rooms now. Pat says this quantity of rest rooms is needed for large school groups and for round up.**

  Action:
  - *Upgrade all day use area facilities to be fully accessible.*
  - *Refuge staff should carefully consider whether even 8 rest rooms are*

~~necessary considering the maintenance they require. One or two accessible rest rooms should be plenty.~~

- *A baseball backstop in the day use area must be removed. This was removed during Summer 2010.*

Requirement 9. Communicate Key Issues with Off-site Audiences

- **Outreach Plan -** Refuge staff may develop an outreach plan as a step-down of the Visitor Services Plan.

  Action: If the Refuge staff choose to develop an outreach plan, it must do the following:

  - *Incorporate Service and Refuge system messages.*
  - *Identify issues important to the Refuge, the community, and other. audiences*
  - *Identify outreach goals.*
  - *Identify level of community awareness and prevailing attitude toward refuge-related issues.*
  - *Identify audiences most affected by prevalent refuge-related issues and actions. Include Congress, corporate sponsors, communities, conservation groups, and communications media.*
  - *Identify community decision-makers and/or opinion leaders.*
  - *Determine the Refuge's key wildlife and habitat conservation messages and tailor them to each audience identified above.*
  - *Identify tools needed to communicate outreach messages (i.e., news releases, portable exhibits, newsletters, editorials, B-roll footage, home pages, etc).*
  - *Identify how to conduct outreach for people with disabilities.*
  - *Identify strategies for conducting outreach (i.e., open houses, programs, off-site/on-site events, newspaper articles, etc.).*
  - *Explain how and when the plan will be evaluated.*

  During this review, Refuge staff brainstormed an extensive list of issues important to the Refuge and it's audiences. We also discussed the level of community awareness toward these Refuge-related issues. We identified the audiences that are most affected by the issues, and determined what the Refuge's key wildlife and habitat conservation messages are. This was a good exercise to do in preparation for the CCP process.

  Action: Refuge staff should work toward producing all printed outreach materials in compliance with the Service Graphic Standards.

Requirement 10. Build Volunteer Programs and Partnerships with Refuge Support Groups

- **Overall Volunteer Program Evaluation -** The Refuge has an established volunteer program. At the beginning of each year, the Refuge staff does an assessment to determine the size and scope of the volunteer program for that year. Because of staffing limitations, the Refuge staff generally has more people interested in volunteering for the Refuge than they can supervise. At the time of this abbreviated review, the Tribe was hiring people to do a lot of the work that used to be done by volunteers.

  Action:
  - *While the volunteer needs of the National Bison Range are being met, the satellite refuges could use more volunteer help. As time and staffing permits, Refuge staff should develop positions for the satellite refuges and recruit volunteers. Lost Trail and Swan River NWRs are no longer under the jurisdiction of the Bison Range, but Pablo and Ninepipes NWRs still are, so this action is still valid for those properties.*
  - *When the budget permits, suggest hiring a volunteer coordinator.*
  - *Use volunteers for interpretive programs and birding at Ninepipes NWR; there is now a volunteer trailer pad located there.*

  Volunteer plan - A formal volunteer plan has not been developed, but the Refuge staff conduct an informal needs assessment each year.

  Action: The year-by-year evaluation is useful, but the Refuge complex would also benefit from a longer term and more comprehensive volunteer plan. This plan should include what training the staff needs, facility needs, and volunteer training needs for the entire complex.

  Volunteer orientation and training - Training and orientation are provided to all volunteers.

  Safety considerations and guidelines - Volunteers are trained in safety.

  Action: There is no work space designated to volunteers – there is no space available at this time. When/if space becomes available, a work area should be designated for volunteers.

  Benefits for volunteers - When possible, volunteers are provided with housing on the Refuge. The bunkhouse will also be available and universally accessible. There are also 2 trailer sites at Ninepipe NWR.

  Action: As funds become available, it is recommended that several trailer pads be constructed on the National Bison Range, and/or on the satellite refuges. This will expand potential volunteers to those who travel the country in their RV's.

  Volunteer funds - Refuge staff works with Glacier Natural History Association aid

funds to support the volunteer program.

Supervision - Pat Jamieson is responsible for the volunteer program. Pat has worked extensively with volunteers.

Volunteer management - Volunteers are always invited to the staff meetings and included as part of the staff. Volunteers are given meaningful duties and specific responsibilities.

Schedule for program evaluation and adjustment - The Refuge staff do not evaluate the volunteer program at the end of the season.

Action: At the end of the volunteer season, staff should discuss what worked and what did not work for volunteers to continue program improvement.

- **Community Partners -** The Refuge works with a number of partners, some through formal agreement and others more informally. Community partners include the Glacier Natural History Association, ~~the Lower Flathead Valley Community Foundation, Salish and Kootenai College, and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.~~

  ~~*Action: These partnerships do not currently have Memorandum of Understandings or Agreements. For the partnerships that are long term and more active, it is recommended that a Memorandum of Understanding or Agreement to formally recognize the relationship be developed.*~~

- **Cooperating Associations** – The cooperating association is the Glacier Natural History Association. Items sold are educational and are supportive of the Refuge System. Accountability, bookkeeping, and reporting regulations are clear to the cooperating association. Profits are used for the volunteer program, brochure publications, and other visitor services needs.

  Action: The sales area would benefit from an increase in size – this would allow the association to expand its selection of items. When/if space becomes available, the sales area should be expanded.

  Action: The higher bookshelves are too high to be universally accessible. The books on the higher shelves need to be relocated to an accessible location.

  Action: The Refuge staff has been provided basic ethics and conduct training but still needs training as it relates to working with partners. This training should be provided when funding allows.

FUTURE PRODUCTS AND ACTIVITIES RECOMMENDED FOR COMPLETION TO MEET THE VISITOR SERVICES REQUIREMENTS

Following is a list of products and activities that should be completed at the National Bison Range to meet the appropriate level of the Visitor Services Requirements. The list is generally in recommended priority order, and it is not all inclusive. Safety issues and changes needed to meet accessibility requirements are the highest priority. We recognize that these products and activities will be completed over time as funding and staff is available. The Project Leader should enter the items below into ~~RONS and MMS.~~ **FBMS?**

- Develop a Visitor Services Plan as a step-down plan to the Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP).
- Develop long term Volunteer Plan for the National Bison Range and satellite refuges.
- Add a footer board to the existing entrance sign with an arrow pointing toward the entrance. **Completed summer 2003 Replace faded logo.**
- Install directional signs as recommended under Requirement 2 of this evaluation.
- Update the orientation kiosk with new panels. Develop one orientation and two seasonal interpretive panels. One of the seasonal panels should focus on regulations ($16,000).
- Develop new Refuge general brochure in compliance with Service Graphic Standards with funding provided by RO.
- Convert all Refuge publications to standard format.
- Once the general brochure has been updated, Refuge staff should work with EVS staff to produce a rack card for a lower cost outreach publication option.
- Create large print versions of Refuge publications.
- Replace three wood-routed regulations signs with aluminum signs and use both upper and lower case letters in text instead of all upper case letters. This will improve readability. **Completed Spring 2003** *This action was completed, but unfortunately, the signs must already be updated, because there is a "no firearms" statement on each sign which contradicts new rules allowing possession of firearms on NWRS lands.*
- *Replace wood-routed sign at the start of Red Sleep Mountain Drive that says, "REMAIN AT YOUR VEHICLE AT ALL TIMES . . ." with aluminum signs, and use both upper and lower case letters in text instead of all upper case letters.*

- *Develop moveable sign - "Bison are dangerous stay in your vehicle"*

- Replace all signs referring to "picnic area," since picnicking is not an appropriate use. This area should be called the "day use area" or "environmental education area."

- A baseball backstop in the day use area must be removed.

- Make improvements necessary to achieve full accessibility for the visitor center - accessible route from vehicle to center and improvements to rest rooms (see Requirement #2).

- Some books in the visitor center sales area are displayed too high to be fully accessible. Relocate books to lower shelves.

- Provide accessible parking for the Bitterroot Trail, the Glacial Lake Missoula overlook, rest rooms located above the Glacial Lake Missoula pull-out, the Nature Trail, and the accessible rest rooms in the Day Use Area.

- Make necessary alterations to make a portion of the Bitterroot Trail accessible, so that all visitors have the opportunity to enjoy a vista point.

- Make all changes necessary to make the Nature Trail (and associated fishing deck), the Grassland Trail, the Day Use Area and the bison corrals fully accessible (see Requirement # 4, 5, & 6).

- Replace visitor center exhibits with new exhibits that are up-to-date, attractive, and meet accessibility standards.

- Expand visitor center and auditorium to accommodate visitor demand.

- Develop a wildlife checklist in the Service Graphics Standard.

- Produce two interpretive panels for the Grassland Trail (see Requirement #5).

- Contract for professionally-produced audio tour of the auto tour route.

- Review overall EE program topics, messages, and objectives and revise as needed.

- Enlist local teachers in developing topics, messages, and objectives that meet the needs of both the schools and the Refuge.

- Review and re-evaluate EE topic folders based on assessment of program topics, messages, and objectives. Update material in folders,and get it on the

web.

- Whenever possible encourage more active partnerships for EE program planning.
- Develop bison teaching trunk. The field study equipment should also be expanded as appropriate to meet the needs of the EE program.
- Install directional signs for Jocko River and Mission Creek Fishing access sites (see Requirement #4).
- Develop a kiosk and interpretive panels for the Jocko River fishing access site. Also, reinstall entrance sign.
- When planning events, programs, workshops, or other visitor opportunity, Refuge staff should make every effort to make those events accessible to people of all abilities.
- All uses will have to be reviewed for appropriateness and compatibility during the CCP process.
- When/if space becomes available, a work area should be designated for volunteers.
- As funds become available, it is recommended that several trailer pads be constructed on the National Bison Range, and/or on the satellite refuges. This will expand potential volunteers to those who travel the country in their RV's.
- While the volunteer needs of the National Bison Range are being met, the satellite refuges could use more volunteer help. As time and staffing permits, Refuge staff should develop positions for the satellite refuges and recruit volunteers. Lost Trail and Swan River NWRs are no longer under the jurisdiction of the Bison Range, but Pablo and Ninepipes NWRs still are.
- When the budget permits, suggest hiring a volunteer coordinator.
- Use volunteers for interpretive programs and birding at Ninepipes NWR; there is now a trailer pad located there
- Develop Memorandums of Understanding or Agreement with all partners.

From:	Emmons, Diane
To:	Bernie Petersen; Bernardo Garza; Vanessa Fields; Hogan, Kelly; Jackie Jacobson; Mary Danno; Kevin Shinn
Subject:	NBR Complex Visitor Services - Discussion this week?
Date:	Monday, October 16, 2017 8:32:30 AM
Attachments:	2011 NBR VS Review.pdf

All -

Bernie and I would like to have a brief discussion about the visitor services and outreach program at the National Bison Range Complex later this week (Wed, Thurs, or Fri). We'd like to do this because we won't have the visitor services review completed prior to the November 7th CCP vision and goals meeting. This will be our opportunity to discuss findings from the previous VS review (attached), talk about what we'll be looking at during the upcoming VS review (Week of Nov 13), and have an initial discussion about the direction of visitor services at NBR.

Can you fill out this Doodle Poll (https://doodle.com/poll/8kgcp4cqkfctxewu) to let me know what days and times work best for you?

Thanks,
Dee

~~~~~~

Diane (Dee) Emmons, Chief, Visitor Services and Outreach (VSO)
Region 6, National Wildlife Refuge System, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
303-236-4392 (Office) || 303-503-2418 (Mobile)
~~~~~~

From:	McCollister, Matthew
To:	Cathey Willis
Cc:	Kelly Hogan; Vanessa Fields; Bernardo Garza; Amy Thornburg
Subject:	NBRC public comments
Date:	Monday, October 16, 2017 11:54:44 AM

The NBRC public scoping comments are available now. Please see the NBRC CCP website below, click the 'Documents' tab at the bottom, and find the NBRC Public Scoping Comments PDF file

https://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/refuges/nbrc.php

--

Matthew McCollister
Wildlife Biologist
Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge
Lewistown, MT

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Vanessa Fields; Kelly Hogan; McCollister, Matthew
Subject:	The comments are now available in the NBR planning page
Date:	Monday, October 16, 2017 12:02:27 PM

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From:	Fields, Vanessa
To:	Bernie Petersen
Subject:	Fwd: NBRC public comments
Date:	Tuesday, October 17, 2017 10:12:30 AM

FYI - wanted to let you know latest on CCP comments/FOIA requests-

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **McCollister, Matthew** <matthew_mccollister@fws.gov>
Date: Mon, Oct 16, 2017 at 11:54 AM
Subject: NBRC public comments
To: Cathey Willis <cathey_willis@fws.gov>
Cc: Kelly Hogan <kelly_hogan@fws.gov>, Vanessa Fields <vanessa_fields@fws.gov>, Bernardo Garza <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>, Amy Thornburg <amy_thornburg@fws.gov>

The NBRC public scoping comments are available now. Please see the NBRC CCP website below, click the 'Documents' tab at the bottom, and find the NBRC Public Scoping Comments PDF file

https://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/refuges/nbrc.php

--
Matthew McCollister
Wildlife Biologist
Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge
Lewistown, MT

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Hogan, Kelly
Cc:	vanessa fields
Subject:	Re: Update
Date:	Thursday, October 19, 2017 8:39:02 AM

Thanks for the update Kelly.

Did he mention anything about proceeding with the workshop as planned?

On Thu, Oct 19, 2017 at 8:37 AM, Hogan, Kelly <kelly_hogan@fws.gov> wrote:

> Bernardo and Vanessa
>
> Just FYI, I got an early morning email from Bernie. He is still busy with roundup and they are shipping Bison today and tomorrow. He will try and set-up a call as soon as he can. Should be done with the Bison after tomorrow.
>
> K

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Hogan, Kelly
To: Garza, Bernardo
Cc: vanessa fields
Subject: Re: Update
Date: Thursday, October 19, 2017 8:43:02 AM

Nope. But did mention he got a call from Lake County about the MOU. I emailed back the situation regarding Jeff needing to get signatures. Have not heard back.

On Thu, Oct 19, 2017 at 8:38 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Thanks for the update Kelly.
>
> Did he mention anything about proceeding with the workshop as planned?
>
> On Thu, Oct 19, 2017 at 8:37 AM, Hogan, Kelly <kelly_hogan@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> > Bernardo and Vanessa
> >
> > Just FYI, I got an early morning email from Bernie. He is still busy with roundup and they are shipping Bison today and tomorrow. He will try and set-up a call as soon as he can. Should be done with the Bison after tomorrow.
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> > K

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Hogan, Kelly
Cc: Bernardo Garza
Subject: Re: Update
Date: Thursday, October 19, 2017 9:09:37 AM

Thanks for the update! If it helps, Dee Emmons was open to expanding the call she was trying to schedule with all of us and Bernie to talk about CCP/Visitor Services review to discuss all things CCP - so that might be another possibility.

It might be a bit extreme, but if we really get in a bind and need someone to physically get the MOU moving, I could go over there and help with that.

On Thu, Oct 19, 2017 at 8:37 AM, Hogan, Kelly <kelly_hogan@fws.gov> wrote:

> Bernardo and Vanessa
>
> Just FYI, I got an early morning email from Bernie. He is still busy with roundup and they are shipping Bison today and tomorrow. He will try and set-up a call as soon as he can. Should be done with the Bison after tomorrow.
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> K

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Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Minor website question
Date: Thursday, October 19, 2017 10:27:01 AM

I have a relatively minor question - I was trying to find the NBR CCP website and I was successful by going to fws - then region 6 - then planning - then clicking on "Comphrehensive Conservation Plans".....

but, what I did at first was go to fws - then region 6 - then planning - and then clicked on Montana on the map on the right side, which then takes you to https://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/refuges/mt_Plan.php

On this page, it does not show the NBR CCP as 'in progress' and there is not a live link from this page to the correct planning page.

I don't know who our web expert it is? I am willing to follow up on this if you can tell me who to contact? Unless you would prefer to be the point person on this?

Thanks!

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Fields, Vanessa
Subject: Re: Minor website question
Date: Thursday, October 19, 2017 10:33:44 AM

Be my guest...

The webmaster is Robert Mansheim, who is located in the Regional IT office

On Thu, Oct 19, 2017 at 10:27 AM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> I have a relatively minor question - I was trying to find the NBR CCP website and I was successful by going to fws - then region 6 - then planning - then clicking on "Comphrehensive Conservation Plans".....
>
> but, what I did at first was go to fws - then region 6 - then planning - and then clicked on Montana on the map on the right side, which then takes you to https://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/refuges/mt_Plan.php
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--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: Minor website question
Date: Thursday, October 19, 2017 10:54:05 AM

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will do. another favor - do you have an electronic version of the latest RO extensions directory? I tried looking on fishnet earlier and couldn't find it?

thank you! again....

On Thu, Oct 19, 2017 at 10:33 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Be my guest...
>
> The webmaster is Robert Mansheim, who is located in the Regional IT office
>
> On Thu, Oct 19, 2017 at 10:27 AM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> > I have a relatively minor question - I was trying to find the NBR CCP website and I was successful by going to fws - then region 6 - then planning - then clicking on "Comphrehensive Conservation Plans".....
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From: Hogan, Kelly
To: Bernardo Garza; vanessa fields; McCollister, Matthew
Cc: Bernie Petersen
Subject: Spoke with Bernie
Date: Thursday, October 19, 2017 11:24:55 AM

All

Bernie called me back, here is the latest:

1) Stay with plans for the Nov. 7th meeting. So make reservations if you have not already.

2) Bernardo, send the MOU to Bernie. He will get the signatures.

3) Dee is planning on a visitor services review next week (either in person or on the phone).

More later,

Kelly

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between the

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Fish and Wildlife Service
Bureau of Indian Affairs – Northwest Region

CONFEDERATED SALISH & KOOTENAI TRIBES

STATE OF MONTANA
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

LAKE COUNTY
Via Lake County Board of Commissioners
A political subdivision of the State of Montana

SANDERS COUNTY
Via Sanders County Board of Commissioners
A political subdivision of the State of Montana

Concerning
Agency Cooperation on the National Bison Range
Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

I. Introduction

The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) requests the federal, state, county, and Native American tribal governments listed above to be Cooperating Agencies in the development of the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the National Bison Range (NBR). The planning area for this CCP is the congressionally-designated NBR boundary located within the Flathead Indian Reservation in the Mission Valley, Lake and Sanders Counties, Montana.

The CCP/EIS process must comply with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) 42 U.S.C. Sec. 4321 and all subsequent regulations implementing NEPA (see Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)) regulations, 40 CFR Part 1500-1508, Department of the Interior (DOI) regulations 43 CFR part 46 and requirements listed in Departmental Manual 516 "Environmental Quality"). In addition, the Service is guided by the Fish and Wildlife Service Manual (602 FW3) on Comprehensive Conservation Planning. The Service also considered the CEQ *Memorandum for the Heads of Federal Agencies, Subject: Cooperating Agencies in Implementing the Procedural Requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act,* January 30, 2002 and the CEQ *Memorandum for Heads of Federal Agencies, Subject: Designation of Non-Federal Agencies to be Cooperating Agencies in Implementing the Procedural Requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act,* July 28, 1999, Executive Order 13352, August 26, 2004, Facilitation of Cooperative Conservation, and other CEQ, DOI, and Service guidance.

II. Purpose of Agreement

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to establish an agreement between the Service and the entities listed above regarding the roles and responsibilities of the agencies during the NEPA process. The Service will be the lead federal Agency and the listed agencies will be Cooperating Agencies on the project.

III. Justification and Roles of Cooperating Agencies

A. Justification for Cooperating Agency Status

1. Each Agency has been appointed as a Cooperating Agency because they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- the Agency has jurisdiction by law of resources within the NBR
- the Agency has specific areas of expertise/knowledge needed for completion of the CCP/EIS

2. Each Cooperating Agency agrees to provide information or data within their area(s) of expertise, attend planning team meetings, and review and comment on documents. Cooperating Agency status comes with an expectation that the Cooperating Agency will bring resources to the table to facilitate the timely completion of the NEPA process. Cooperating agencies may also help prepare or submit alternatives or mitigation measures to be considered in the process.

3. Nothing in this MOU shall obligate the Cooperating Agencies to expend appropriations or to enter into any contract or other obligation. Specific work projects or activities that involve the transfer of fund, service, or property between the parties to this MOU will require the execution of separate agreements or contracts, contingent upon the availability of funds as appropriated by Congress. Each subsequent agreement or arrangement involving the transfer of funds, services, or property shall be made in writing

and shall be independently authorized by appropriate statutory authority and regulations, including those applicable to procurement activities.

4. The Cooperating Agencies agree to assist the Service in providing accurate information to the public (43 CFR 46.225 (a) – (d)). The CCP/EIS planning process for the NBR is intended to be transparent with all agencies, organizations, stakeholder groups and the general public. The Service regularly provides information about its planning process through planning updates, press releases, briefings, hard copies of documents, and posting documents on the Service's website. All information presented to the public must be approved for publication by the Service. The Service recognizes that other Federal agencies, county representatives, and Native American tribal government representatives must adhere to their public disclosure laws as necessary; however, releases of predecisional information (including working drafts) in a manner that purposely undermines or circumvents the spirit of this MOU, which is to develop a framework to work cooperatively in developing the CCP/EIS, or consistently misrepresents the planning process may be grounds to terminate the Cooperating Agency status. When information is received, the Service cannot agree to maintain confidentiality of this information except to the extent that is permitted under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and the Privacy Act of 1974.

B. Cooperating Agencies

Bureau of Indian Affairs, Northwest Region (BIANR)

- The Service provides an opportunity for other Federal agencies to serve on planning teams (Planning Policy, Fish and Wildlife Service Manual 602 FW3).
- BIANR has information and expertise that will assist the Service in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:
    - Federal government relationships with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and other Native American tribal governments
    - Tribal lands irrigation facilities management and expertise
- BIANR will provide representatives to serve on the planning team.

Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes (CSKT)

- The Service provides an opportunity for Tribal Governments agencies to serve on planning teams (Planning Policy, Fish and Wildlife Service Manual 602 FW3).
- CSKT has information and expertise that will assist the Service in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:
    - Cultural resources management and conservation
    - Biological information on wildlife and habitat conditions
    - Fire management expertise
    - Socioeconomic conditions and trends in the planning area
    - Transportation
    - Land Use Information and Plans
    - Noxious or invasive weeds and invasive aquatic species
    - Tourism and visitor services

- Public health issues
- Emergency management and response
- Law enforcement assistance and expertise
- Fisheries

- CSKT shall assign representatives and designated alternates to speak on behalf of the Tribal Government. It is the responsibility of the assigned representatives to keep the CSKT Chairman and other Tribal Government officials briefed on the key developments of the CCP/EIS. To ensure consistency in communications, the same representatives shall serve for the duration of the project if at all possible. On occasion and as necessary and appropriate, other CSKT members may be briefed on key developments in the planning process.

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MTFWP)

- The Service provides an opportunity for State conservation agencies that have a direct land management relationship with the refuge, the opportunity to serve on planning teams (Planning Policy, Fish and Wildlife Service Manual 602 FW3). The Service and MTFWP work cooperatively on many issues pertaining to wildlife, habitat, noxious weeds, and fire.

- MTFWP have information and expertise that will assist the Service in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:

  - Biological information on wildlife and habitat conditions
  - Fisheries
  - Hunting and fishing data
  - Law enforcement expertise and assistance
  - Fire management and data
  - Noxious or invasive weeds and invasive aquatic species

- MTFWP will assign representatives and designated alternates to serve on the planning team and speak on behalf of MTFWP.

LAKE AND SANDERS COUNTIES (Counties) - Political Subdivisions of the State of Montana

Via Lake County Board of Commissioners
Via Sanders County Board of Commissioners

- The Counties and their agencies have information and expertise (Executive Order 13352) that will assist in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:

  - Cultural resources, custom heritage and history
  - Biological information on wildlife, flora, fauna and habitat conditions
  - Fisheries
  - Fire management expertise
  - Socioeconomic conditions and trends in the planning area
  - Transportation
  - Land Use Information and Plans

- Noxious or invasive weeds and invasive aquatic species
- Tourism and visitor services
- Public health issues
- Emergency management and response
- Law enforcement assistance and expertise
- Resource utilization at or adjacent to the premises

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C. Roles and Responsibilities

1. The agencies listed above understand that their Cooperating Agency status does not confer to them any special authority to change, edit, or veto all or part of the CCP or EIS.

2. In cases where a Cooperating Agency provides information it considers confidential, the Service will work with a Cooperating Agency to present the information in a manner that protects the rights of the Cooperating Agency before sharing the information necessary for the environmental analysis with the other Cooperating Agencies. The release of Service information to a Federal, Tribal, State or local Agency that includes proprietary or confidential information must be reviewed under FOIA and adhere to statutory and regulatory authorities. The parties to this MOU will have access to all information necessary for their Cooperating Agency participation in the environmental analysis to the extent permitted by applicable law. The parties agree not to release pre-decisional information (including working drafts) in a manner that undermines the Service's intent to provide accurate information to the public about its planning process as described under III. A. 4. When any of the Cooperating Agencies in this MOU must disclose information under their disclosure laws, the Service requests notification of any public disclosure of CCP/EIS documents made by an Agency to this agreement (43 CFR 46.225 (d)).

3. The Service possesses sole authority to direct the actions of its Contractors.

4. The Service is responsible for making all substantive decisions involving the CCP/EIS and is the final decision maker for disputes that may arise in the process. The Cooperating Agencies agree that, once such disputes are resolved, they will not be revisited. However, the Cooperating Agencies retain the right to comment on all issues related to the CCP/EIS, including those in dispute, through the normal NEPA process.

5. Veto or decision-making power does not accompany Cooperating Agency status. As the lead Agency charged with carrying out the NEPA process under Section 102(2) (c) of NEPA, the Service retains sole decision-making authority over the CCP/EIS and its process.

6. The Service or Cooperating Agencies may terminate this agreement by providing written notice of the termination to the other parties.

IV. Authority

This memorandum is entered into under the following laws, authorities and regulations:

A. National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, PL 91-190, 42 U.S.C. 4321

B. Council of Environmental Quality NEPA Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508)

C. National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended (16USC 668dd et seq.) The act formally defines the mission of the Refuge System as the administration of *"a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitat within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans" (16 USC 668dd(a)(2)).*

V. Process and Procedure

1. The Service is the lead Agency for ensuring full compliance of the CCP and EIS with the requirements of NEPA. Under applicable laws, rules, regulations, orders, and policies, the Service shall ensure that all necessary consultation and consideration is performed with all Federal, State, Tribal, and local governments and private organizations.

2. The Service will coordinate and consult with the Cooperating Agencies throughout the preparation of the CCP/EIS, particularly during the scoping and the Draft CCP/EIS development and impact analysis. This consultation is to assess alternatives accurately; identify areas that require clarification; and to avoid, mitigate, or otherwise address impacts to the natural environment.

3. The Service has full responsibility for implementing procedures and regulations including, but not limited to, public review of the CCP/EIS, public distribution of the CCP/EIS, and required decision documentation.

4. The Service will arrange, announce, and conduct scoping meetings and will analyze the results.

5. The Service will meet with the Cooperating Agencies at least once during each strategic phase of the planning process (Scoping, Alternatives, Draft CCP/EIS, and Final CCP/EIS) and more often if needed. All Cooperating Agencies may participate in discussions on the proposed action and on special or critical resource needs related to the plan. The Service will provide the Cooperating Agencies with opportunities to opportunities to submit alternatives and mitigation measures, and to review and comment on all of these and the preliminary Draft and Final CCP/EIS. The Cooperating Agencies will provide comments to the Service within the overall time schedule.

6. The Service will provide copies of correspondence to the Cooperating Agencies as it applies to their area(s) of expertise, and the development of alternatives and the plan.

7. Through consultation with the Cooperating Agencies, the Service is responsible for selection of the Preferred Alternative and preparation of the Record of Decision. The Service's Regional Director for Region 6, Mountain-Prairie Region is the final decision maker for the Record of Decision.

8. The primary designated points of contacts for the Service shall be the NBR Complex Project Leader, Jeff King, and Planning Team Co-Leaders, Bernardo Garza and Toni Griffin (Region 6, Mountain-Prairie Region,

Division of People, Policy and Planning, Branch of Policy and Planning, Lakewood, Colorado). Other NBR Complex staff and personnel from the Service's Region 6 may also serve on the planning team.

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10. The Cooperating Agencies shall provide responses to data requests and provide review comments to the Service within the overall planning schedule.

11. The Service will document all meetings, emails, and phone conversations for inclusion in the Administrative Record for the CCP/EIS. The Service will maintain the official Administrative Record.
12. The Service will have primary responsibility for writing and rewriting all sections, parts, or chapters of the CCP/EIS and for reestablishing a schedule for completion of chapters consistent with the overall planning schedule. As appropriate, Cooperating Agencies may also help accomplish the same.

13. The Service will be the recipient of all comments on the CCP/EIS resulting from the review and comment periods.

13. Upon revision of the Draft CCP/EIS, the Service will provide the Cooperating Agencies with a list of the significant changes in the Final CCP/EIS.

VII. Administration

1. Modifications to this MOU may be proposed by the Service or by the Cooperating Agencies and shall become effective upon the written approval of all parties. Changes to this MOU must be initialed and dated on each replacement page by an authorized agent of each party.

2. Any party may withdraw from this MOU after 30 days written notice of their intention to do so to the other parties.

3. Nothing in this agreement will be construed as limiting or affecting in any way the authority or responsibility of the Service or the Cooperating Agencies to perform within their authority.

4. This MOU is not intended to create, nor shall this MOU be construed or interpreted as creating, a binding or legally enforceable contract among the parties. The sole remedy for the failure of a party to fully comply with the provisions of this MOU shall be termination hereof.

This MOU will become effective upon the signature of all of its participants.

Approved

_____ _____
Jeff King, Project Leader, Date
National Bison Range Complex

_____ _____
Stanley Speaks, Regional Director Date
Bureau of Indian Affairs – Northwest Regional Office

_____ _____
Vernon Finley, Chairman Date
Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes

_____ _____
Neil Anderson, Regional Wildlife Program Manager Date
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

_____ _____
Gale Decker Date
Lake County Board of Commissioners
A political subdivision of the State of Montana

_____ _____
Carol Brooker, Presiding Officer Date
Sanders County Board of Commissioners
A political subdivision of the State of Montana

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Hogan, Kelly
Cc:	vanessa fields; McCollister, Matthew; Bernie Petersen
Subject:	Re: Spoke with Bernie
Date:	Thursday, October 19, 2017 11:40:53 AM
Attachments:	NBR CCP and EIS Cooperating Agencies MOU.pdf

Bernie,

Here's the MOU

On Thu, Oct 19, 2017 at 11:24 AM, Hogan, Kelly <kelly_hogan@fws.gov> wrote:

> All
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> Bernie called me back, here is the latest:
>
> 1) Stay with plans for the Nov. 7th meeting. So make reservations if you have not already.
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> 2) Bernardo, send the MOU to Bernie. He will get the signatures.
>
> 3) Dee is planning on a visitor services review next week (either in person or on the phone).
>
> More later,
>
> Kelly

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between the

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Fish and Wildlife Service
Bureau of Indian Affairs – Northwest Region

CONFEDERATED SALISH & KOOTENAI TRIBES

STATE OF MONTANA
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

LAKE COUNTY
Via Lake County Board of Commissioners
A political subdivision of the State of Montana

SANDERS COUNTY
Via Sanders County Board of Commissioners
A political subdivision of the State of Montana

Concerning
Agency Cooperation on the National Bison Range
Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

I. Introduction

The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) requests the federal, state, county, and Native American tribal governments listed above to be Cooperating Agencies in the development of the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the National Bison Range (NBR). The planning area for this CCP is the congressionally-designated NBR boundary located within the Flathead Indian Reservation in the Mission Valley, Lake and Sanders Counties, Montana.

The CCP/EIS process must comply with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) 42 U.S.C. Sec. 4321 and all subsequent regulations implementing NEPA (see Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)) regulations, 40 CFR Part 1500-1508, Department of the Interior (DOI) regulations 43 CFR part 46 and requirements listed in Departmental Manual 516 "Environmental Quality"). In addition, the Service is guided by the Fish and Wildlife Service Manual (602 FW3) on Comprehensive Conservation Planning. The Service also considered the CEQ *Memorandum for the Heads of Federal Agencies, Subject: Cooperating Agencies in Implementing the Procedural Requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act,* January 30, 2002 and the CEQ *Memorandum for Heads of Federal Agencies, Subject: Designation of Non-Federal Agencies to be Cooperating Agencies in Implementing the Procedural Requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act,* July 28, 1999, Executive Order 13352, August 26, 2004, Facilitation of Cooperative Conservation, and other CEQ, DOI, and Service guidance.

II. Purpose of Agreement

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to establish an agreement between the Service and the entities listed above regarding the roles and responsibilities of the agencies during the NEPA process. The Service will be the lead federal Agency and the listed agencies will be Cooperating Agencies on the project.

III. Justification and Roles of Cooperating Agencies

A. Justification for Cooperating Agency Status

1. Each Agency has been appointed as a Cooperating Agency because they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- the Agency has jurisdiction by law of resources within the NBR
- the Agency has specific areas of expertise/knowledge needed for completion of the CCP/EIS

2. Each Cooperating Agency agrees to provide information or data within their area(s) of expertise, attend planning team meetings, and review and comment on documents. Cooperating Agency status comes with an expectation that the Cooperating Agency will bring resources to the table to facilitate the timely completion of the NEPA process. Cooperating agencies may also help prepare or submit alternatives or mitigation measures to be considered in the process.

3. Nothing in this MOU shall obligate the Cooperating Agencies to expend appropriations or to enter into any contract or other obligation. Specific work projects or activities that involve the transfer of fund, service, or property between the parties to this MOU will require the execution of separate agreements or contracts, contingent upon the availability of funds as appropriated by Congress. Each subsequent agreement or arrangement involving the transfer of funds, services, or property shall be made in writing

and shall be independently authorized by appropriate statutory authority and regulations, including those applicable to procurement activities.

4. The Cooperating Agencies agree to assist the Service in providing accurate information to the public (43 CFR 46.225 (a) – (d)). The CCP/EIS planning process for the NBR is intended to be transparent with all agencies, organizations, stakeholder groups and the general public. The Service regularly provides information about its planning process through planning updates, press releases, briefings, hard copies of documents, and posting documents on the Service's website. All information presented to the public must be approved for publication by the Service. The Service recognizes that other Federal agencies, county representatives, and Native American tribal government representatives must adhere to their public disclosure laws as necessary; however, releases of predecisional information (including working drafts) in a manner that purposely undermines or circumvents the spirit of this MOU, which is to develop a framework to work cooperatively in developing the CCP/EIS, or consistently misrepresents the planning process may be grounds to terminate the Cooperating Agency status. When information is received, the Service cannot agree to maintain confidentiality of this information except to the extent that is permitted under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and the Privacy Act of 1974.

B. Cooperating Agencies

Bureau of Indian Affairs, Northwest Region (BIANR)

- The Service provides an opportunity for other Federal agencies to serve on planning teams (Planning Policy, Fish and Wildlife Service Manual 602 FW3).
- BIANR has information and expertise that will assist the Service in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:
    - Federal government relationships with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and other Native American tribal governments
    - Tribal lands irrigation facilities management and expertise
- BIANR will provide representatives to serve on the planning team.

Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes (CSKT)

- The Service provides an opportunity for Tribal Governments agencies to serve on planning teams (Planning Policy, Fish and Wildlife Service Manual 602 FW3).
- CSKT has information and expertise that will assist the Service in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:
    - Cultural resources management and conservation
    - Biological information on wildlife and habitat conditions
    - Fire management expertise
    - Socioeconomic conditions and trends in the planning area
    - Transportation
    - Land Use Information and Plans
    - Noxious or invasive weeds and invasive aquatic species
    - Tourism and visitor services

- Public health issues
- Emergency management and response
- Law enforcement assistance and expertise
- Fisheries

- CSKT shall assign representatives and designated alternates to speak on behalf of the Tribal Government. It is the responsibility of the assigned representatives to keep the CSKT Chairman and other Tribal Government officials briefed on the key developments of the CCP/EIS. To ensure consistency in communications, the same representatives shall serve for the duration of the project if at all possible. On occasion and as necessary and appropriate, other CSKT members may be briefed on key developments in the planning process.

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MTFWP)

- The Service provides an opportunity for State conservation agencies that have a direct land management relationship with the refuge, the opportunity to serve on planning teams (Planning Policy, Fish and Wildlife Service Manual 602 FW3). The Service and MTFWP work cooperatively on many issues pertaining to wildlife, habitat, noxious weeds, and fire.

- MTFWP have information and expertise that will assist the Service in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:

  - Biological information on wildlife and habitat conditions
  - Fisheries
  - Hunting and fishing data
  - Law enforcement expertise and assistance
  - Fire management and data
  - Noxious or invasive weeds and invasive aquatic species

- MTFWP will assign representatives and designated alternates to serve on the planning team and speak on behalf of MTFWP.

LAKE AND SANDERS COUNTIES (Counties) - Political Subdivisions of the State of Montana

Via Lake County Board of Commissioners
Via Sanders County Board of Commissioners

- The Counties and their agencies have information and expertise (Executive Order 13352) that will assist in the preparation of the CCP/EIS pertaining to:

  - Cultural resources, custom heritage and history
  - Biological information on wildlife, flora, fauna and habitat conditions
  - Fisheries
  - Fire management expertise
  - Socioeconomic conditions and trends in the planning area
  - Transportation
  - Land Use Information and Plans

- Noxious or invasive weeds and invasive aquatic species
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C. Roles and Responsibilities

1. The agencies listed above understand that their Cooperating Agency status does not confer to them any special authority to change, edit, or veto all or part of the CCP or EIS.

2. In cases where a Cooperating Agency provides information it considers confidential, the Service will work with a Cooperating Agency to present the information in a manner that protects the rights of the Cooperating Agency before sharing the information necessary for the environmental analysis with the other Cooperating Agencies. The release of Service information to a Federal, Tribal, State or local Agency that includes proprietary or confidential information must be reviewed under FOIA and adhere to statutory and regulatory authorities. The parties to this MOU will have access to all information necessary for their Cooperating Agency participation in the environmental analysis to the extent permitted by applicable law. The parties agree not to release pre-decisional information (including working drafts) in a manner that undermines the Service's intent to provide accurate information to the public about its planning process as described under III. A. 4. When any of the Cooperating Agencies in this MOU must disclose information under their disclosure laws, the Service requests notification of any public disclosure of CCP/EIS documents made by an Agency to this agreement (43 CFR 46.225 (d)).

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Jeff King, Project Leader, Date
National Bison Range Complex

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Stanley Speaks, Regional Director Date
Bureau of Indian Affairs – Northwest Regional Office

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Vernon Finley, Chairman Date
Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes

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Neil Anderson, Regional Wildlife Program Manager Date
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

_____ _____
Gale Decker Date
Lake County Board of Commissioners
A political subdivision of the State of Montana

_____ _____
Carol Brooker, Presiding Officer Date
Sanders County Board of Commissioners
A political subdivision of the State of Montana

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Hogan, Kelly
Cc:	vanessa fields; McCollister, Matthew; Bernie Petersen
Subject:	Re: Spoke with Bernie
Date:	Thursday, October 19, 2017 11:40:58 AM
Attachments:	NBR CCP and EIS Cooperating Agencies MOU.pdf

Bernie,

Here's the MOU

On Thu, Oct 19, 2017 at 11:24 AM, Hogan, Kelly <kelly_hogan@fws.gov> wrote:

> All
>
> Bernie called me back, here is the latest:
>
> 1) Stay with plans for the Nov. 7th meeting. So make reservations if you have not already.
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> 2) Bernardo, send the MOU to Bernie. He will get the signatures.
>
> 3) Dee is planning on a visitor services review next week (either in person or on the phone).
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> More later,
>
> Kelly

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Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Bernie Petersen
Cc:	Kelly Hogan; Vanessa Fields
Subject:	Fwd: Spoke with Bernie
Date:	Thursday, October 19, 2017 11:57:38 AM

That sounds OK with me.

I hope the counties don't get upset and contact the RD again. I believe that at least Lake County has been requesting a copy of the signed MOU for a while now.

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Bernie Petersen** <bernie_petersen@fws.gov>
Date: Thu, Oct 19, 2017 at 11:54 AM
Subject: RE: Spoke with Bernie
To: Bernardo Garza <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>

That should work we can get the signatures at the NOV 7 meeting possibly.

Bernard J Petersen

Refuge Supervisor for Colorado,Montana, Utah, Wyoming

US Fish and Wildlife Service Region 6

National Wildlife Refuge System

303-236-4310 W

720-708-8026 Cell

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Thursday, October 19, 2017 11:52 AM
To: Hogan, Kelly
Cc: vanessa fields; McCollister, Matthew; Bernie Petersen
Subject: Re: Spoke with Bernie

Kevin Shinn just emailed me and told me that he has the MOU with MTFWP signature. I don't know where he's currently located, but said in his email that he'll be back in Lost Trail NWR tomorrow...

Maybe we could use the MOU that Kevin has and begin collecting the rest of the signatures...

Bernie and Kelly: What do you think?

Also Vanessa had offered to help route the MOU for signatures...

let me know

On Thu, Oct 19, 2017 at 11:40 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

Bernie,

Here's the MOU

On Thu, Oct 19, 2017 at 11:24 AM, Hogan, Kelly <kelly_hogan@fws.gov> wrote:

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More later,

Kelly

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Bernardo Garza

Planning Team Leader

Branch of Policy and Planning

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region

Office (303) 236-4377

Fax (303) 236-4792

--

Bernardo Garza

Planning Team Leader

Branch of Policy and Planning

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Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Bernie Petersen
To: Vanessa Fields
Subject: RE: NBRC public comments
Date: Thursday, October 19, 2017 12:06:29 PM

Vanessa,

We should try to touch base sometime next week. I am meeting with Dee to do a Visitor Services review part of the week, what does your schedule look like for the end of the week?

Bernard J Petersen
Refuge Supervisor for Colorado,Montana, Utah, Wyoming
US Fish and Wildlife Service Region 6
National Wildlife Refuge System

303-236-4310 W
720-708-8026 Cell

From: Fields, Vanessa [mailto:vanessa_fields@fws.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, October 17, 2017 10:13 AM
To: Bernie Petersen
Subject: Fwd: NBRC public comments

FYI - wanted to let you know latest on CCP comments/FOIA requests-

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **McCollister, Matthew** <matthew_mccollister@fws.gov>
Date: Mon, Oct 16, 2017 at 11:54 AM
Subject: NBRC public comments
To: Cathey Willis <cathey_willis@fws.gov>
Cc: Kelly Hogan <kelly_hogan@fws.gov>, Vanessa Fields <vanessa_fields@fws.gov>, Bernardo Garza <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>, Amy Thornburg <amy_thornburg@fws.gov>

The NBRC public scoping comments are available now. Please see the NBRC CCP website below, click the 'Documents' tab at the bottom, and find the NBRC Public Scoping Comments PDF file

https://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/refuges/nbrc.php

--
Matthew McCollister
Wildlife Biologist
Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge
Lewistown, MT

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Bernie Petersen
Subject: Re: NBRC public comments
Date: Thursday, October 19, 2017 12:58:13 PM

I am very open next week - I would be more than happy to come over and meet in person if you want.

On Thu, Oct 19, 2017 at 12:06 PM, Bernie Petersen <bernie_petersen@fws.gov> wrote:

> Vanessa,
>
> We should try to touch base sometime next week. I am meeting with Dee to do a Visitor Services review part of the week, what does your schedule look like for the end of the week?
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> Bernard J Petersen
>
> Refuge Supervisor for Colorado,Montana, Utah, Wyoming
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> US Fish and Wildlife Service Region 6
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> 720-708-8026 Cell
>
> **From:** Fields, Vanessa [mailto:vanessa_fields@fws.gov]
> **Sent:** Tuesday, October 17, 2017 10:13 AM
> **To:** Bernie Petersen
> **Subject:** Fwd: NBRC public comments
>
> FYI - wanted to let you know latest on CCP comments/FOIA requests-
>
> ---------- Forwarded message ----------
> From: **McCollister, Matthew** <matthew_mccollister@fws.gov>
> Date: Mon, Oct 16, 2017 at 11:54 AM
> Subject: NBRC public comments
> To: Cathey Willis <cathey_willis@fws.gov>

Cc: Kelly Hogan <kelly_hogan@fws.gov>, Vanessa Fields <vanessa_fields@fws.gov>, Bernardo Garza <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>, Amy Thornburg <amy_thornburg@fws.gov>

The NBRC public scoping comments are available now. Please see the NBRC CCP website below, click the 'Documents' tab at the bottom, and find the NBRC Public Scoping Comments PDF file

https://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/refuges/nbrc.php

--

Matthew McCollister
Wildlife Biologist
Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge

Lewistown, MT

--

Vanessa Fields

Invasive Species Ecologist

Division of Science Resources

922 Bootlegger Trail

Great Falls, MT 59404

406-727-7400 x219

406-217-6473 (cell)

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
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Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From:	Bernie Petersen
To:	Bernardo Garza
Cc:	Kelly Hogan; Vanessa Fields
Subject:	RE: Spoke with Bernie
Date:	Thursday, October 19, 2017 1:06:17 PM

I will call him today or tomorrow and let him know what we are planning

Bernard J Petersen
Refuge Supervisor for Colorado,Montana, Utah, Wyoming
US Fish and Wildlife Service Region 6
National Wildlife Refuge System

303-236-4310 W
720-708-8026 Cell

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Thursday, October 19, 2017 11:58 AM
To: Bernie Petersen
Cc: Kelly Hogan; Vanessa Fields
Subject: Fwd: Spoke with Bernie

That sounds OK with me.

I hope the counties don't get upset and contact the RD again. I believe that at least Lake County has been requesting a copy of the signed MOU for a while now.

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Bernie Petersen** <bernie_petersen@fws.gov>
Date: Thu, Oct 19, 2017 at 11:54 AM
Subject: RE: Spoke with Bernie
To: Bernardo Garza <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>

That should work we can get the signatures at the NOV 7 meeting possibly.

Bernard J Petersen
Refuge Supervisor for Colorado,Montana, Utah, Wyoming
US Fish and Wildlife Service Region 6
National Wildlife Refuge System

303-236-4310 W
720-708-8026 Cell

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Thursday, October 19, 2017 11:52 AM
To: Hogan, Kelly
Cc: vanessa fields; McCollister, Matthew; Bernie Petersen
Subject: Re: Spoke with Bernie

Kevin Shinn just emailed me and told me that he has the MOU with MTFWP signature. I don't know where he's currently located, but said in his email that he'll be back in Lost Trail NWR tomorrow...

Maybe we could use the MOU that Kevin has and begin collecting the rest of the signatures...

Bernie and Kelly: What do you think?

Also Vanessa had offered to help route the MOU for signatures...

let me know

On Thu, Oct 19, 2017 at 11:40 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:
Bernie,

Here's the MOU

On Thu, Oct 19, 2017 at 11:24 AM, Hogan, Kelly <kelly_hogan@fws.gov> wrote:
All

Bernie called me back, here is the latest:

1) Stay with plans for the Nov. 7th meeting. So make reservations if you have not already.

2) Bernardo, send the MOU to Bernie. He will get the signatures.

3) Dee is planning on a visitor services review next week (either in person or on the phone).

More later,

Kelly

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, **Mountain-Prairie Region**
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

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From: Bernie Petersen
To: Vanessa Fields
Subject: RE: NBRC public comments
Date: Thursday, October 19, 2017 1:10:37 PM

Since we will be meeting on the 7th I don't know if that is necessary. I think a quick call will do for now, unless you have more to discuss than I know of?

Bernard J Petersen
Refuge Supervisor for Colorado,Montana, Utah, Wyoming
US Fish and Wildlife Service Region 6
National Wildlife Refuge System

303-236-4310 W
720-708-8026 Cell

From: Fields, Vanessa [mailto:vanessa_fields@fws.gov]
Sent: Thursday, October 19, 2017 12:58 PM
To: Bernie Petersen
Subject: Re: NBRC public comments

I am very open next week - I would be more than happy to come over and meet in person if you want.

On Thu, Oct 19, 2017 at 12:06 PM, Bernie Petersen <bernie_petersen@fws.gov> wrote:

Vanessa,

We should try to touch base sometime next week. I am meeting with Dee to do a Visitor Services review part of the week, what does your schedule look like for the end of the week?

Bernard J Petersen
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To: Bernie Petersen
Subject: Fwd: NBRC public comments

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Date: Mon, Oct 16, 2017 at 11:54 AM

Subject: NBRC public comments
To: Cathey Willis <cathey_willis@fws.gov>
Cc: Kelly Hogan <kelly_hogan@fws.gov>, Vanessa Fields <vanessa_fields@fws.gov>, Bernardo Garza <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>, Amy Thornburg <amy_thornburg@fws.gov>

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Matthew McCollister
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From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Bernie Petersen
Subject: Re: NBRC public comments
Date: Thursday, October 19, 2017 1:51:27 PM

A phone call is fine - I do have lots of questions since I am trying to play catch-up as quickly as I can. I know both Bernardo and I also have questions about how the current circumstances affect the CCP process - would you be open to including him in our conversation also?

Did you want to set up a specific day/time or just plan to connect towards the end of next week?

On Thu, Oct 19, 2017 at 1:10 PM, Bernie Petersen <bernie_petersen@fws.gov> wrote:

> Since we will be meeting on the 7th I don't know if that is necessary. I think a quick call will do for now, unless you have more to discuss than I know of?
>
> Bernard J Petersen
>
> Refuge Supervisor for Colorado,Montana, Utah, Wyoming
>
> US Fish and Wildlife Service Region 6
>
> National Wildlife Refuge System
>
> 303-236-4310 W
>
> 720-708-8026 Cell
>
> **From:** Fields, Vanessa [mailto:vanessa_fields@fws.gov]
> **Sent:** Thursday, October 19, 2017 12:58 PM
> **To:** Bernie Petersen
> **Subject:** Re: NBRC public comments
>
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> Vanessa,

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Bernard J Petersen

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From: Bernie Petersen
To: Vanessa Fields
Subject: RE: NBRC public comments
Date: Thursday, October 19, 2017 2:31:16 PM

Let's you and I talk first

Bernard J Petersen
Refuge Supervisor for Colorado,Montana, Utah, Wyoming
US Fish and Wildlife Service Region 6
National Wildlife Refuge System

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From: Fields, Vanessa [mailto:vanessa_fields@fws.gov]
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Subject: Re: NBRC public comments

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To: Bernie Petersen
Subject: Re: NBRC public comments

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Cc: Kelly Hogan <kelly_hogan@fws.gov>, Vanessa Fields <vanessa_fields@fws.gov>, Bernardo Garza <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>, Amy Thornburg <amy_thornburg@fws.gov>

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https://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/refuges/nbrc.php

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Lewistown, MT

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Great Falls, MT 59404
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406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Edwards, Helen
Subject: Re: Welcome Back!
Date: Thursday, October 19, 2017 2:53:21 PM

Thank you. How about meeting in the Refuges conference room

On Thu, Oct 19, 2017 at 2:51 PM, Edwards, Helen <helen_edwards@fws.gov> wrote:

> yes we can let me know if you want me to come to your office or wherever will work for me.
>
> Helen Edwards
> Budget Technician
> 303-236-4390
> 303-236-4792(FAX)
> 134 Union Blvd Suite 300
> Lakewood, CO 80228
>
> On Thu, Oct 19, 2017 at 2:49 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> > Helen,
> >
> > Do you think we could meet today @ 3 pm?
> >
> > On Thu, Oct 19, 2017 at 10:41 AM, Edwards, Helen <helen_edwards@fws.gov> wrote:
> >
> > > Ok sounds good. I'm off tomorrow but will be in on Monday as well. Let me know whatever you need.
> > >
> > > Helen Edwards
> > > Budget Technician
> > > 303-236-4390
> > > 303-236-4792(FAX)
> > > 134 Union Blvd Suite 300
> > > Lakewood, CO 80228
> > >
> > > On Thu, Oct 19, 2017 at 8:17 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:
> > >
> > > > Thank you Helen.
> > > >
> > > > Let me look at the things I need to finish by today and I'll propose a time...
> > > >
> > > > On Thu, Oct 19, 2017 at 7:06 AM, Edwards, Helen <helen_edwards@fws.gov> wrote:
> > > >
> > > > > Thank you Bernardo. Yes my detail was great in so many ways!!!!! I'd be happy to meet with you anytime today Thurs you just let me know!!!!
> > > > >
> > > > > Helen Edwards
> > > > > Budget Technician
> > > > > 303-236-4390
> > > > > 303-236-4792(FAX)
> > > > > 134 Union Blvd Suite 300
> > > > > Lakewood, CO 80228

On Wed, Oct 18, 2017 at 9:49 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Hello Helen,
>
> Welcome back traveler!
>
> I hope that your detail was as good as you expected.
>
> I'm wondering if you might have some today to chat with me.
>
> I would imagine that, having been at the Bison Range, you are completely aware of the management situation there at the moment, and of things that can be discussed and what probably shouldn't be discussed.
>
> However, since I am trying to help that staff develop their CCP, and we have scheduled a workshop with them at the beginning of November, I would really appreciate if somebody could tell me what is the "mood" among the Bison Range staffers at the moment.
>
> Do you think you can share that with me?
>
> Please let me know.
>
> Thank you
>
> --
> **Bernardo Garza**
> **Planning Team Leader**
> **Branch of Policy and Planning**
> **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region**
> **Office (303) 236-4377**
> **Fax (303) 236-4792**

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Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
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From:	Fields, Vanessa
To:	Garza, Bernardo
Cc:	Matthew McCollister
Subject:	Additional notes on JanNOI comments
Date:	Friday, October 20, 2017 12:10:45 PM

Hi Bernardo-

As you requested/suggested, I took a look again at the January NOI comments to see what there might be in terms of substantive issues beyond just the comments of 'I like it' and 'I don't like it'. I think there were several substantive comments, primarily from the NGOs, but a few from individuals too. Since I haven't had a chance to catch up on the comments from the May NOI yet, I suspect a lot of these are repeated in the second set of comments. But since I don't have time to read through all of those before I give you this for our Friday deadline, I will just give you what I have and whatever is duplicative, we can just sort through.

I built the summary onto a document that it looks like Toni had started (I also reviewed the spreadsheets Matthew and Brian Salem had built). In doing so, it looks like she referenced a comment from the Blue Goose Alliance from the first NOI that I don't think made it into the packet of comments we posted on the web. I did find the comment in P:\ccp\nbrc\NBR\CCP\public scoping\NOI Jan2017\comments rec'd\Final BGA NBR NOI-Scoping Comments.pdf. Also, Toni referenced a comment from Lake County from that first NOI and I can't find that comment at all? Is there a hard copy maybe that didn't get converted electronically? I don't see it in the document we posted on the web either.

I posted my updated summary of the January NOI comments at:
P:\ccp\nbrc\NBR\CCP\public scoping\NOI Jan2017\
NBR CCP Scoping Summary_JanNOI_102017.docx

I am around today until 1:30pm and then in all next week, so we can chat about this more when you have a moment.

Thanks! And have a good weekend!

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Fields, Vanessa
Subject: Re: updates
Date: Wednesday, October 25, 2017 11:53:11 AM

Wow!

Thank you Vanessa!

On Wed, Oct 25, 2017 at 11:24 AM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> Good morning Bernardo!
>
> A couple of quick updates - I checked with the hotel and we can have lunch brought into our conference room from the MacKenzie River Pizza restaurant next door. We can just circulate menus in the morning, put in the order, and then they can bring over the food with drinks, utensils, etc.
> We probably need to remember to give folks a head's up on that when we send out the meeting materials so that they bring cash.
>
> I have a rough draft of a powerpoint for presenting and a powerpoint of wall posters saved in the P drive
> P:\ccp\nbrc\Common\Workshops\Purposes Vision and Goals
>
> I did the presentation with no color or backgrounds - if you have a powerpoint example with the background you like that you could save in that folder, I can convert it over to that. I am not really spending much time on the Vision section/slides since I figure you will want to edit that to your liking.
>
> I also saved an updated version of the handout with a revised section on the NBR purpose and a few other comments (I saved it as new version, so the previous one is still there).
>
> Still haven't heard from Bernie - I will send him a reminder if I don't hear from him.
>
> --
> Vanessa Fields
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--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region

Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: updates
Date: Wednesday, October 25, 2017 2:53:30 PM

---

you did all the hard work...I just did a lot of copying and pasting!

On Wed, Oct 25, 2017 at 11:53 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Wow!
>
> Thank you Vanessa!
>
> On Wed, Oct 25, 2017 at 11:24 AM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> > Good morning Bernardo!
> >
> > A couple of quick updates - I checked with the hotel and we can have lunch brought into our conference room from the MacKenzie River Pizza restaurant next door. We can just circulate menus in the morning, put in the order, and then they can bring over the food with drinks, utensils, etc.
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BLUE GOOSE ALLIANCE
1050 MATADOR DRIVE SE
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO 87123

SCOPING COMMENTS: Re: National Bison Range-Notice of Intent

Sent by email to: Toni_Griffin@fws.gov; Jeff_King@fws.gov
Date: February 13, 2017

Ms. Griffin, and Project Leader King:

These scoping comments from the Blue Goose Alliance respond to the January 18, 2017 Federal Register Notice of Intent signed by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Regional Director Noreen Walsh. The Blue Goose Alliance (BGA or Alliance) is a private, non-profit organization incorporated in New Mexico and granted an Internal Revenue Service status of 501(c)(3). The BGA has consistently been deeply involved, since 2002, with the National Bison Range (NBR), a National Wildlife Refuge in Montana. The BGA is dedicated to maintaining the integrity of the National Wildlife Refuge System, supporting proper funding, growth, and management of the System in compliance with its primary guiding statutes, and seeking elevation of the NWRS to separate agency status within the Department of the Interior (DOI).

Introduction

At the outset, we are compelled to point out deficiencies in the Notice of Intent (NOI), including potentially precedent-setting features that should be scrapped and a new NOI, in compliance with FWS Manual policies, should be published. As published on Jan. 18, 2017, the NOI specifies that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be prepared as part of the Comprehensive Conservation Planning (CCP) process. Further, the Notice states that the EIS will contain three alternatives; one of which has already been selected as the preferred alternative.

FWS guidelines for Comprehensive Planning (602 FW 3, June 21, 2000), and FWS compliance guidelines for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA, Exhibit 1 at 550 FW 2) indicate that an Environmental Assessment (EA) normally should accompany the planning effort. An EIS is used when significant environmental effects are determined to exist by means of analyses made during preparation of the CCP-EA, or through internal FWS scoping to evaluate an anticipated major federal action. At this stage of the planning process – lacking any public scoping, consultation with numerous stakeholders including other federal and state agencies – and without any justifying explanation, it is not appropriate for FWS to have published the Jan. 18 Notice. We urge that either a proper supplemental CCP-NOI be published immediately, or the initial NOI be withdrawn until a proper notice can be fashioned and issued.

The intent of Comprehensive Conservation Planning is fully expressed in the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act (NWRSAA, 80 Stat. 929; 16 U.S.C. 668dd-668ee). The Congress intended that FWS carefully and thoroughly plan for the effective

future management of every refuge in the System, and directed that once completed, management of each refuge should follow the guidance of its CCP.

CCPs are entirely intended for future refuge management by FWS. None of the hundreds of CCPs completed in compliance with the NWR Administration Act were developed as a means of divesting a refuge from the Refuge System, yet suddenly Region 6 has issued an NOI that specifies such an intent, even going to the extreme of declaring they will prepare an EIS with a pre-determined preferred alternative. That "Alternative B" calls for the transfer of this National Wildlife Refuge out of its public lands status into an "Indian Trust" status. In that status, its future management, development, uses, and all public entry will be solely controlled by the Tribal Council. Once the NBR lands have been transferred to tribal trust status, only the U.S. Congress has authority to determine if tribal management complies with the provisions of the transferring statute, alter, or order compliance with the transfer provisions of those lands. History documents that each future Tribal governing body has absolute authority to modify previous terms of development, operation or management. The conditions and specifications of the transferring statute are, factually, unenforceable.

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By leaping to issuance of a CCP-NOI/EIS with pre-determined preferred alternative, the FWS implementing actions would be in violation of its basic refuge organic act, policies and practices formalized in its manuals, and the National Environmental Policy Act. Such a maneuver is ironic in that the FWS is already in federal court for its failure to comply with refuge laws and NEPA.

FWS lacks capability to fully implement a CCP-NOI

The current lack of essential staff and basic funding at the NBR cannot support the demands of initiating a Comprehensive Conservation Plan with accompanying NEPA documents.

Required extensive public outreach, organization of a properly convened Coordinating Team, providing basic facts and details to the interested stakeholders and the public via widely disseminated pamphlets and circulars, and devoting attention to the vital analyses of input from those varied sources would overwhelm the currently available personnel at the refuge and in the Regional Office.

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The Regional Chief of Refuges has the responsibility to provide resources necessary to support each refuge in the Region. Various reasons have been offered to explain the demonstrably inadequate staff and funding for the Bison Range—but it remains a failure that must be remedied prior to initiating a CCP/NEPA document. The NBR has an approved staffing plan, and an appropriation allocated by the Congress for its operation. Neither the funds nor staff authorized have been released to the Project Leader.

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The discussion of the original establishing purpose(s), should also include the purposes added by the 1921 Executive Order to protect native birds, and the 1958 Statute requiring establishment and maintenance of a bison exhibition pasture. Additionally, the mandates in the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act requiring each refuge to contribute to purposes of the System, and the overarching direction to the Secretary to assure all refuges are managed for biological diversity, integrity and environmental health should be recognized as purposes. The discussion should clearly establish the foundation to guide future wildlife and habitat management of the National Bison Range, while permitting the specified compatible public uses.

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Habitat is at the heart of all wildlife management. The NBR's unique relict Palouse grassland now integrated with the rare intermountain grassland type places the NBR in a position of being the sole U.S. National Wildlife Refuge with the responsibility for protection and maintenance of this scarce and valuable habitat type. Hosting a year-around complex of large mammal species, many of which are grazing animals, results in grazer concentrations within the relatively small 18,900-acre refuge requiring application of intensive management techniques not required on a much larger grassland area.

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Climate Change

A major complicating factor that must be thoroughly addressed in the CCP is the expected features and likely impacts to be expected from the effects of Climate Change. It is likely that some subtle, but important changes have already begun to affect the NBR plants and animals. The Coordinating Team should consist of expert wildlife, plant, disease, genetic, and ecosystem specialists from agencies such as the State Fish and Game Department, State agricultural agency, USGS Biological Division, Natural

Resources Conservation Service, USFS, County officials, the University of Montana, and others in order to have the expertise necessary for identifying and analyzing available data along with interpreting models of expected climate changes in Western Montana and the Mission Valley in particular.

Cultural, Archeological and Related Resources

The National Bison Range was established during the Congressionally mandated allotment process to tribal members of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes—followed immediately by opening the remaining lands within the Flathead Reservation to non-Indians for settlement under the provisions of the Public Land Laws of the U.S. Native peoples have lived on and used these lands, and other lands beyond the Reservation boundaries, for millennia. It is to be expected that the area contains cultural materials and areas important to the tribes and its members. Federal laws mandate that the FWS must recognize its responsibility to identify, protect, consult with the tribes about, and otherwise respect such important cultural features, artifacts, etc. This topic should be given thorough thought and discussion. The Tribes have previously completed a cultural survey and report under contract to the FWS. The CCP process should provide an appropriate opportunity to analyze that report and decide if additional cultural survey work should be done in the future, its nature, the cooperating parties, and related factors that will lead to properly complying with the law, and the desires of the Tribes and members.

Visitor Services, Recreation, Environmental Education outreach

Among the outstanding features of the National Bison Range is its reputation for providing a spectacular display of wildlife in natural settings with the highly aesthetic background of the Mission Mountain Range and adjacent pastoral setting of the valley. With visitation now approaching a quarter million each year, most from states and countries beyond Montana's borders, the NBR ranks among or exceeds the visitation experienced by the "Urban Refuges" so pridefully featured by the FWS (each so designated was recently "granted" an addition of $1 million to its base budget – but no such money was provided to NBR). The lack of staff has curtailed many of the outreach programs that have been very successful and highly praised among the Valley schools in the past.

It is clear from the original reconnaissance report to the American Bison Society by Dr. Morton Elrod, to the later reports published by the ABS, the NBR was intended to be a place for the public to come, to experience, and to benefit from NBRs accessible and captivating panorama. What has resulted from the generous gifts of rare and endangered wildlife made to the NBR by the ABS, other states, Canada, Cities, conservation organizations and individuals has been made even more special due to the successes and operating practices of the professional refuge staffs.

Further, the unique trust relationship set up by the Congressional directive to President Theodore Roosevelt to establish the NBR, including where to establish it, and then consistently funding the refuge for the ensuing 109 years represents a hallmark of wildlife conservation in America. The National Bison Range, its bison and other wildlife, are long-established Federal Public Trusts[12] that, by statute, may not be given away, transferred, or sold solely based on a decision of a Director, Secretary, or even the President.[3456] Fifty-Five consecutive Congresses have honored the commitment by the 60th Congress in accepting the gift of pure blood bison from the American Bison Society (with money donated by citizens from 29 states and the District of Columbia) and enacting provisions establishing a "permanent National Bison Range" in Montana. The intervening Congresses have consistently appropriated funds for its acquisition (twice), its staff, infrastructure, operational and management needs thereby assuring proper long-term conservation of the highly valuable bison strain represented by the resulting herd. Those values – that commitment – should not be squandered in a way that dishonors the Century of pioneering efforts, the successes over time in overcoming sizeable obstacles, difficult biological, ecological, and related problems. The plains bison is at a crossroads today. There are remaining obstacles to the necessary final efforts to reintroduce the plains bison back to its ecological home. The federal conservation herds are the primary sources of founding genetic material that is essential to achieving a remarkable recovery program. The NBR is among the very few herds with unique genetic materials necessary to assure that future plains bison are fully and properly representative of their ancestors, the 30 – 60 million monarchs of the prairies and plains of North America. The CCP should give full recognition to that set of facts.

The NEPA Document and Process

As alluded to earlier in these comments, the highly unusual and likely extra-legal announcement that the FWS intends to prepare an EIS with a given set of alternatives and with a pre-determined "Preferred" alternative is precedent setting, unwise, and subject to judicial challenge and review. Further, the preparation of a full-featured Environmental Impact Statement is costly, and time consuming. The Alliance believes that FWS should withdraw the EIS feature of the Jan. 18 CCP-NOI and begin its NBR-CCP process using the model most frequently utilized in CCPs since the earliest ones – an Environmental Assessment process. That will facilitate placing needed attention on

[1] Blumm, Michael C. and Lynn Schaffer (2014). *The Federal Public Trust Doctrine: A Law Professor's Amicus Brief*. Brief signed by more than 50 law professors (collectively having >1100 years of teaching experience) urging the Supreme Court to review a lower court's decision in Alec L v. McCarthy, 561 F.Appx. 7 (D.C.Cir. 2014)

[2] Sax, Joseph L. (1970). *The Public Trust Doctrine in Natural Resources Law – Effective Judicial Intervention.* 68 Mich. L. Rev. 471 (1970).

[3] Bean, Michael and Melanie Rowland (3rd Ed, 1997) *Evolution of National Wildlife Law.* Praeger Publ., CT; pp. 289-291.;

[4] Civil No. 75-1004 (D.D.C. Jan. 26, 1976)

[5] 43 U.S.C.A. 1761-65, Oct. 21, 1976

[6] Act of Feb. 27, 1976, Pub. L. No. 94-223, 90 Stat. 199 (codified at 16 U.S.C. 668dd).

the CCP rather than the rigorous EIS demands. The costs will be considerably lower. And, if the EA process should conclude, after considering public scoping, Cooperating agency input, stakeholder ideas and suggestions, etc., that an EIS is necessary, they will have a firm foundation from which to work.

The final topic to be addressed is the statement in the NOI that the FWS "intends to invite the CSKT to participate as a cooperating agency …." Given the efforts undertaken by the CSKT since the Feb. 5, 2016 announcement by the Service that it had initiated discussions with the tribes to consider transfer of the NBR to the tribes in a Tribal Trust status, and the explicit statement in the Jan. 18 CCP/EIS NOI, such a move would result in a huge conflict of interest situation, that would inevitably taint the entire process. The tribes have developed and released to limited public review a proposal that goes far beyond merely transferring the NBR lands to Tribal Trust status.

The value of the "lands, facilities, equipment, developments, structures, improvements, appurtenances and all personal property" (as described in the CSKT—9/13/2016—revised draft proposal for legislation transferring the National Bison Range to Tribal Trust) have an estimated value of $60 million to $100 million. Those values currently belong to the citizens of America—bought and paid for by them. The NWRSAA expressly provides that if lands acquired by the FWS for refuges is to be divested from the NWRS, it can be done only by means of an exchange for lands of equal value, or it must be paid for at today's fair market value. The amounts are significant. Having CSKT sitting on the "Coordinating Team" would be an unacceptable conflict of interest.

The Tribes obviously deserve a voice in the process of developing a CCP. But, not on the Coordinating Team. They should join the ranks of the public, the conservation NGOs, and other stakeholders in making their views known. The analysis of their views should be made by an unbiased, properly constituted Coordinating Team.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment. The Alliance is hopeful that the Service will seriously consider, and upon seeing the expressed needs for changes to be made to the published Notice of Intent, withdrawing the one printed in the Jan. 18 Federal Register and ultimately publish one that incorporates these and other comments received by interested parties.

Sincerely,

William C. Reffalt, Vice President
Blue Goose Alliance
Albuquerque, NM 87123

Lake County Commissioners *406-883-7204* *Fax (406) 883-7283*

LAKE COUNTY

106 4th Ave. E. *lakecommissioners @ lakemt.gov* *Polson, Mt. 59860*

RECEIVED
JAN 31 2017
US FWS

RA RG

January 23, 2017

RD's Office - Region 1
Received:
FEB 06 2017
USFWS
Portland, OR

United States Fish & Wildlife Service
1849 C. St. NW
Washington, DC 20240

United States Fish & Wildlife Service
1387 S. Vinnel Way
Boise, ID 83709

National Bison Range
58355 Bison Range Road
Moiese, MT 59824

SUBJECT: National Bison Range EIS

Ladies & Gentlemen,

Lake County, a political subdivision for the State of Montana, desires to cooperate with the US FWS in preparation of the Bison Range EIS and comprehensive plan.

This is a right under Federal law for States, Tribes and local governments units and we desire to do the same ASAP. This is important, as Lake County needs to be involved from the beginning of the scoping process.

If you need more information, please contact us. A copy of the local newspaper article is attached. We anticipate hearing from you by Feb 3, 2017.

BOARD OF LAKE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Gail Decker, Chairman

Dave Stipe, Member

William D. Barron, Member

From: McCollister, Matthew
To: Fields, Vanessa
Cc: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: Additional notes on JanNOI comments
Date: Thursday, October 26, 2017 10:17:57 AM
Attachments: Final BGA NBR NOI-Scoping Comments.pdf
Lake Jan comment.pdf

Regarding the two 'missing" comments you asked about, attached is one of them from Lake County, it was omitted from the comments pdf on the CCP website because it is a letter saying they don't want to be left out of being a cooperating agency, not really a CCP comment, just a reminder from the county, one of several.

the second is from blue goose alliance, and should be added to the website comments, I have printed it and it is now in our paper file as well.

On Fri, Oct 20, 2017 at 12:10 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> Hi Bernardo-
>
> As you requested/suggested, I took a look again at the January NOI comments to see what there might be in terms of substantive issues beyond just the comments of 'I like it' and 'I don't like it'. I think there were several substantive comments, primarily from the NGOs, but a few from individuals too. Since I haven't had a chance to catch up on the comments from the May NOI yet, I suspect a lot of these are repeated in the second set of comments. But since I don't have time to read through all of those before I give you this for our Friday deadline, I will just give you what I have and whatever is duplicative, we can just sort through.
>
> I built the summary onto a document that it looks like Toni had started (I also reviewed the spreadsheets Matthew and Brian Salem had built). In doing so, it looks like she referenced a comment from the Blue Goose Alliance from the first NOI that I don't think made it into the packet of comments we posted on the web. I did find the comment in P:\ccp\nbrc\NBR\CCP\public scoping\NOI Jan2017\comments rec'd\Final BGA NBR NOI-Scoping Comments.pdf. Also, Toni referenced a comment from Lake County from that first NOI and I can't find that comment at all? Is there a hard copy maybe that didn't get converted electronically? I don't see it in the document we posted on the web either.
>
> I posted my updated summary of the January NOI comments at:
> P:\ccp\nbrc\NBR\CCP\public scoping\NOI Jan2017\
> NBR CCP Scoping Summary_JanNOI_102017.docx
>
> I am around today until 1:30pm and then in all next week, so we can chat about this more when you have a moment.
>
> Thanks! And have a good weekend!
>
> --
> Vanessa Fields

Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

--
Matthew McCollister
Wildlife Biologist
Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge
Lewistown, MT

BLUE GOOSE ALLIANCE
1050 MATADOR DRIVE SE
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO 87123

SCOPING COMMENTS: Re: National Bison Range-Notice of Intent

Sent by email to: Toni_Griffin@fws.gov; Jeff_King@fws.gov
Date: February 13, 2017

Ms. Griffin, and Project Leader King:

These scoping comments from the Blue Goose Alliance respond to the January 18, 2017 Federal Register Notice of Intent signed by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Regional Director Noreen Walsh. The Blue Goose Alliance (BGA or Alliance) is a private, non-profit organization incorporated in New Mexico and granted an Internal Revenue Service status of 501(c)(3). The BGA has consistently been deeply involved, since 2002, with the National Bison Range (NBR), a National Wildlife Refuge in Montana. The BGA is dedicated to maintaining the integrity of the National Wildlife Refuge System, supporting proper funding, growth, and management of the System in compliance with its primary guiding statutes, and seeking elevation of the NWRS to separate agency status within the Department of the Interior (DOI).

Introduction

At the outset, we are compelled to point out deficiencies in the Notice of Intent (NOI), including potentially precedent-setting features that should be scrapped and a new NOI, in compliance with FWS Manual policies, should be published. As published on Jan. 18, 2017, the NOI specifies that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be prepared as part of the Comprehensive Conservation Planning (CCP) process. Further, the Notice states that the EIS will contain three alternatives; one of which has already been selected as the preferred alternative.

FWS guidelines for Comprehensive Planning (602 FW 3, June 21, 2000), and FWS compliance guidelines for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA, Exhibit 1 at 550 FW 2) indicate that an Environmental Assessment (EA) normally should accompany the planning effort. An EIS is used when significant environmental effects are determined to exist by means of analyses made during preparation of the CCP-EA, or through internal FWS scoping to evaluate an anticipated major federal action. At this stage of the planning process – lacking any public scoping, consultation with numerous stakeholders including other federal and state agencies – and without any justifying explanation, it is not appropriate for FWS to have published the Jan. 18 Notice. We urge that either a proper supplemental CCP-NOI be published immediately, or the initial NOI be withdrawn until a proper notice can be fashioned and issued.

The intent of Comprehensive Conservation Planning is fully expressed in the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act (NWRSAA, 80 Stat. 929; 16 U.S.C. 668dd-668ee). The Congress intended that FWS carefully and thoroughly plan for the effective

future management of every refuge in the System, and directed that once completed, management of each refuge should follow the guidance of its CCP.

CCPs are entirely intended for future refuge management by FWS. None of the hundreds of CCPs completed in compliance with the NWR Administration Act were developed as a means of divesting a refuge from the Refuge System, yet suddenly Region 6 has issued an NOI that specifies such an intent, even going to the extreme of declaring they will prepare an EIS with a pre-determined preferred alternative. That "Alternative B" calls for the transfer of this National Wildlife Refuge out of its public lands status into an "Indian Trust" status. In that status, its future management, development, uses, and all public entry will be solely controlled by the Tribal Council. Once the NBR lands have been transferred to tribal trust status, only the U.S. Congress has authority to determine if tribal management complies with the provisions of the transferring statute, alter, or order compliance with the transfer provisions of those lands. History documents that each future Tribal governing body has absolute authority to modify previous terms of development, operation or management. The conditions and specifications of the transferring statute are, factually, unenforceable.

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Resources Conservation Service, USFS, County officials, the University of Montana, and others in order to have the expertise necessary for identifying and analyzing available data along with interpreting models of expected climate changes in Western Montana and the Mission Valley in particular.

Cultural, Archeological and Related Resources

The National Bison Range was established during the Congressionally mandated allotment process to tribal members of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes—followed immediately by opening the remaining lands within the Flathead Reservation to non-Indians for settlement under the provisions of the Public Land Laws of the U.S. Native peoples have lived on and used these lands, and other lands beyond the Reservation boundaries, for millennia. It is to be expected that the area contains cultural materials and areas important to the tribes and its members. Federal laws mandate that the FWS must recognize its responsibility to identify, protect, consult with the tribes about, and otherwise respect such important cultural features, artifacts, etc. This topic should be given thorough thought and discussion. The Tribes have previously completed a cultural survey and report under contract to the FWS. The CCP process should provide an appropriate opportunity to analyze that report and decide if additional cultural survey work should be done in the future, its nature, the cooperating parties, and related factors that will lead to properly complying with the law, and the desires of the Tribes and members.

Visitor Services, Recreation, Environmental Education outreach

Among the outstanding features of the National Bison Range is its reputation for providing a spectacular display of wildlife in natural settings with the highly aesthetic background of the Mission Mountain Range and adjacent pastoral setting of the valley. With visitation now approaching a quarter million each year, most from states and countries beyond Montana's borders, the NBR ranks among or exceeds the visitation experienced by the "Urban Refuges" so pridefully featured by the FWS (each so designated was recently "granted" an addition of $1 million to its base budget – but no such money was provided to NBR). The lack of staff has curtailed many of the outreach programs that have been very successful and highly praised among the Valley schools in the past.

It is clear from the original reconnaissance report to the American Bison Society by Dr. Morton Elrod, to the later reports published by the ABS, the NBR was intended to be a place for the public to come, to experience, and to benefit from NBRs accessible and captivating panorama. What has resulted from the generous gifts of rare and endangered wildlife made to the NBR by the ABS, other states, Canada, Cities, conservation organizations and individuals has been made even more special due to the successes and operating practices of the professional refuge staffs.

Further, the unique trust relationship set up by the Congressional directive to President Theodore Roosevelt to establish the NBR, including where to establish it, and then consistently funding the refuge for the ensuing 109 years represents a hallmark of wildlife conservation in America. The National Bison Range, its bison and other wildlife, are long-established Federal Public Trusts[12] that, by statute, may not be given away, transferred, or sold solely based on a decision of a Director, Secretary, or even the President.[3456] Fifty-Five consecutive Congresses have honored the commitment by the 60th Congress in accepting the gift of pure blood bison from the American Bison Society (with money donated by citizens from 29 states and the District of Columbia) and enacting provisions establishing a "permanent National Bison Range" in Montana. The intervening Congresses have consistently appropriated funds for its acquisition (twice), its staff, infrastructure, operational and management needs thereby assuring proper long-term conservation of the highly valuable bison strain represented by the resulting herd. Those values – that commitment – should not be squandered in a way that dishonors the Century of pioneering efforts, the successes over time in overcoming sizeable obstacles, difficult biological, ecological, and related problems. The plains bison is at a crossroads today. There are remaining obstacles to the necessary final efforts to reintroduce the plains bison back to its ecological home. The federal conservation herds are the primary sources of founding genetic material that is essential to achieving a remarkable recovery program. The NBR is among the very few herds with unique genetic materials necessary to assure that future plains bison are fully and properly representative of their ancestors, the 30 – 60 million monarchs of the prairies and plains of North America. The CCP should give full recognition to that set of facts.

The NEPA Document and Process

As alluded to earlier in these comments, the highly unusual and likely extra-legal announcement that the FWS intends to prepare an EIS with a given set of alternatives and with a pre-determined "Preferred" alternative is precedent setting, unwise, and subject to judicial challenge and review. Further, the preparation of a full-featured Environmental Impact Statement is costly, and time consuming. The Alliance believes that FWS should withdraw the EIS feature of the Jan. 18 CCP-NOI and begin its NBR-CCP process using the model most frequently utilized in CCPs since the earliest ones – an Environmental Assessment process. That will facilitate placing needed attention on

[1] Blumm, Michael C. and Lynn Schaffer (2014). *The Federal Public Trust Doctrine: A Law Professor's Amicus Brief*. Brief signed by more than 50 law professors (collectively having >1100 years of teaching experience) urging the Supreme Court to review a lower court's decision in Alec L v. McCarthy, 561 F.Appx. 7 (D.C.Cir. 2014)

[2] Sax, Joseph L. (1970). *The Public Trust Doctrine in Natural Resources Law – Effective Judicial Intervention.* 68 Mich. L. Rev. 471 (1970).

[3] Bean, Michael and Melanie Rowland (3rd Ed, 1997) *Evolution of National Wildlife Law.* Praeger Publ., CT; pp. 289-291.;

[4] Civil No. 75-1004 (D.D.C. Jan. 26, 1976)

[5] 43 U.S.C.A. 1761-65, Oct. 21, 1976

[6] Act of Feb. 27, 1976, Pub. L. No. 94-223, 90 Stat. 199 (codified at 16 U.S.C. 668dd).

the CCP rather than the rigorous EIS demands. The costs will be considerably lower. And, if the EA process should conclude, after considering public scoping, Cooperating agency input, stakeholder ideas and suggestions, etc., that an EIS is necessary, they will have a firm foundation from which to work.

The final topic to be addressed is the statement in the NOI that the FWS "intends to invite the CSKT to participate as a cooperating agency …." Given the efforts undertaken by the CSKT since the Feb. 5, 2016 announcement by the Service that it had initiated discussions with the tribes to consider transfer of the NBR to the tribes in a Tribal Trust status, and the explicit statement in the Jan. 18 CCP/EIS NOI, such a move would result in a huge conflict of interest situation, that would inevitably taint the entire process. The tribes have developed and released to limited public review a proposal that goes far beyond merely transferring the NBR lands to Tribal Trust status.

The value of the "lands, facilities, equipment, developments, structures, improvements, appurtenances and all personal property" (as described in the CSKT—9/13/2016—revised draft proposal for legislation transferring the National Bison Range to Tribal Trust) have an estimated value of $60 million to $100 million. Those values currently belong to the citizens of America—bought and paid for by them. The NWRSAA expressly provides that if lands acquired by the FWS for refuges is to be divested from the NWRS, it can be done only by means of an exchange for lands of equal value, or it must be paid for at today's fair market value. The amounts are significant. Having CSKT sitting on the "Coordinating Team" would be an unacceptable conflict of interest.

The Tribes obviously deserve a voice in the process of developing a CCP. But, not on the Coordinating Team. They should join the ranks of the public, the conservation NGOs, and other stakeholders in making their views known. The analysis of their views should be made by an unbiased, properly constituted Coordinating Team.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment. The Alliance is hopeful that the Service will seriously consider, and upon seeing the expressed needs for changes to be made to the published Notice of Intent, withdrawing the one printed in the Jan. 18 Federal Register and ultimately publish one that incorporates these and other comments received by interested parties.

Sincerely,

William C. Reffalt, Vice President
Blue Goose Alliance
Albuquerque, NM 87123

Lake County Commissioners *406-883-7204* *Fax (406) 883-7283*

LAKE COUNTY

106 4th Ave. E. *lakecommissioners @ lakemt.gov* *Polson, Mt. 59860*

RECEIVED
JAN 31 2017
US FWS

RA RG

January 23, 2017

RD's Office - Region 1
Received:
FEB 06 2017
USFWS
Portland, OR

United States Fish & Wildlife Service
1849 C. St. NW
Washington, DC 20240

United States Fish & Wildlife Service
1387 S. Vinnel Way
Boise, ID 83709

National Bison Range
58355 Bison Range Road
Moiese, MT 59824

SUBJECT: National Bison Range EIS

Ladies & Gentlemen,

Lake County, a political subdivision for the State of Montana, desires to cooperate with the US FWS in preparation of the Bison Range EIS and comprehensive plan.

This is a right under Federal law for States, Tribes and local governments units and we desire to do the same ASAP. This is important, as Lake County needs to be involved from the beginning of the scoping process.

If you need more information, please contact us. A copy of the local newspaper article is attached. We anticipate hearing from you by Feb 3, 2017.

BOARD OF LAKE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Gail Decker, Chairman

Dave Stipe, Member

William D. Barron, Member

From: McCollister, Matthew
To: Fields, Vanessa
Cc: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: Additional notes on JanNOI comments
Date: Thursday, October 26, 2017 10:17:58 AM
Attachments: Final BGA NBR NOI-Scoping Comments.pdf
Lake Jan comment.pdf

Regarding the two 'missing" comments you asked about, attached is one of them from Lake County, it was omitted from the comments pdf on the CCP website because it is a letter saying they don't want to be left out of being a cooperating agency, not really a CCP comment, just a reminder from the county, one of several.

the second is from blue goose alliance, and should be added to the website comments, I have printed it and it is now in our paper file as well.

On Fri, Oct 20, 2017 at 12:10 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> Hi Bernardo-
>
> As you requested/suggested, I took a look again at the January NOI comments to see what there might be in terms of substantive issues beyond just the comments of 'I like it' and 'I don't like it'. I think there were several substantive comments, primarily from the NGOs, but a few from individuals too. Since I haven't had a chance to catch up on the comments from the May NOI yet, I suspect a lot of these are repeated in the second set of comments. But since I don't have time to read through all of those before I give you this for our Friday deadline, I will just give you what I have and whatever is duplicative, we can just sort through.
>
> I built the summary onto a document that it looks like Toni had started (I also reviewed the spreadsheets Matthew and Brian Salem had built). In doing so, it looks like she referenced a comment from the Blue Goose Alliance from the first NOI that I don't think made it into the packet of comments we posted on the web. I did find the comment in P:\ccp\nbrc\NBR\CCP\public scoping\NOI Jan2017\comments rec'd\Final BGA NBR NOI-Scoping Comments.pdf. Also, Toni referenced a comment from Lake County from that first NOI and I can't find that comment at all? Is there a hard copy maybe that didn't get converted electronically? I don't see it in the document we posted on the web either.
>
> I posted my updated summary of the January NOI comments at:
> P:\ccp\nbrc\NBR\CCP\public scoping\NOI Jan2017\
> NBR CCP Scoping Summary_JanNOI_102017.docx
>
> I am around today until 1:30pm and then in all next week, so we can chat about this more when you have a moment.
>
> Thanks! And have a good weekend!
>
> --
> Vanessa Fields

Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

--
Matthew McCollister
Wildlife Biologist
Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge
Lewistown, MT

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Bernie Petersen
Bcc:	Kelly Hogan; Vanessa Fields; McCollister, Matthew
Subject:	Quick Question
Date:	Monday, October 30, 2017 1:45:20 PM

Hello Bernie,

Regarding next Monday's meeting with NBR staff, did you have a time of day and meeting length in mind?

Kelly, Matt and I are trying to figure out our travel to make it to the meeting, but there aren't many options.

Would it work for you and the staff if we arrived at NBR @ 2:45 pm for the meeting on Monday?

Please advise so we can finalize tweaking our travel plans

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From:	Bernie Petersen
To:	Bernardo Garza
Cc:	Kelly Hogan
Subject:	RE: Quick Question
Date:	Monday, October 30, 2017 1:53:55 PM

This was just a quick meeting to introduce Vanessa to the staff before the formal meeting in Polson. You don't need to cram your schedules to make it here just for that. Is there a need to get together prior to the start of the meeting on Tuesday?

Bernard J Petersen
Refuge Supervisor for Colorado,Montana, Utah, Wyoming
US Fish and Wildlife Service Region 6
National Wildlife Refuge System

303-236-4310 W
720-708-8026 Cell

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Monday, October 30, 2017 1:45 PM
To: Bernie Petersen
Subject: Quick Question

Hello Bernie,

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From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Vanessa Fields
Subject:	Fwd: Quick Question
Date:	Monday, October 30, 2017 2:00:06 PM

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Bernie Petersen** <bernie_petersen@fws.gov>
Date: Mon, Oct 30, 2017 at 1:53 PM
Subject: RE: Quick Question
To: Bernardo Garza <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>
Cc: Kelly Hogan <kelly_hogan@fws.gov>

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US Fish and Wildlife Service Region 6

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From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Monday, October 30, 2017 1:45 PM
To: Bernie Petersen
Subject: Quick Question

Hello Bernie,

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From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Bernie Petersen
Cc: Vanessa Fields
Subject: Re: Quick Question
Date: Monday, October 30, 2017 2:25:11 PM

Bernie,

Do you think you, Vanessa and I could have a quick conference call yet today?

On Mon, Oct 30, 2017 at 1:53 PM, Bernie Petersen <bernie_petersen@fws.gov> wrote:

> This was just a quick meeting to introduce Vanessa to the staff before the formal meeting in Polson. You don't need to cram your schedules to make it here just for that. Is there a need to get together prior to the start of the meeting on Tuesday?
>
> Bernard J Petersen
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> US Fish and Wildlife Service Region 6
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> 303-236-4310 W
>
> 720-708-8026 Cell
>
> **From:** Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
> **Sent:** Monday, October 30, 2017 1:45 PM
> **To:** Bernie Petersen
> **Subject:** Quick Question
>
> Hello Bernie,
>
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From: Bernie Petersen
To: Bernardo Garza
Subject: RE: Quick Question
Date: Monday, October 30, 2017 2:32:40 PM

I am going to be tied up this afternoon but we could talk in the morning

Bernard J Petersen
Refuge Supervisor for Colorado,Montana, Utah, Wyoming
US Fish and Wildlife Service Region 6
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From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Monday, October 30, 2017 2:25 PM
To: Bernie Petersen
Cc: Vanessa Fields
Subject: Re: Quick Question

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From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Monday, October 30, 2017 1:45 PM
To: Bernie Petersen
Subject: Quick Question

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--
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From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Bernie Petersen
Subject: Re: Quick Question
Date: Monday, October 30, 2017 2:43:26 PM

Would 10 or 10:30 am work for you?

On Mon, Oct 30, 2017 at 2:32 PM, Bernie Petersen <bernie_petersen@fws.gov> wrote:

> I am going to be tied up this afternoon but we could talk in the morning
>
> Bernard J Petersen
>
> Refuge Supervisor for Colorado,Montana, Utah, Wyoming
>
> US Fish and Wildlife Service Region 6
>
> National Wildlife Refuge System
>
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> 720-708-8026 Cell
>
> **From:** Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
> **Sent:** Monday, October 30, 2017 2:25 PM
> **To:** Bernie Petersen
> **Cc:** Vanessa Fields
> **Subject:** Re: Quick Question
>
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Sent: Monday, October 30, 2017 1:45 PM
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From: Bernie Petersen
To: Bernardo Garza
Subject: RE: Quick Question
Date: Monday, October 30, 2017 2:44:51 PM

Let's shoot for 10

Bernard J Petersen
Refuge Supervisor for Colorado,Montana, Utah, Wyoming
US Fish and Wildlife Service Region 6
National Wildlife Refuge System

303-236-4310 W
720-708-8026 Cell

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Monday, October 30, 2017 2:43 PM
To: Bernie Petersen
Subject: Re: Quick Question

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Cc: Vanessa Fields
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From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Bernie Petersen
Subject: Re: Quick Question
Date: Monday, October 30, 2017 2:46:41 PM

Very well.

I'll inform Vanessa.

On Mon, Oct 30, 2017 at 2:44 PM, Bernie Petersen <bernie_petersen@fws.gov> wrote:

> Let's shoot for 10
>
> Bernard J Petersen
>
> Refuge Supervisor for Colorado,Montana, Utah, Wyoming
>
> US Fish and Wildlife Service Region 6
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> National Wildlife Refuge System
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> **From:** Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
> **Sent:** Monday, October 30, 2017 2:43 PM
> **To:** Bernie Petersen
> **Subject:** Re: Quick Question
>
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>
> On Mon, Oct 30, 2017 at 2:32 PM, Bernie Petersen <bernie_petersen@fws.gov> wrote:
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Cc: Vanessa Fields
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From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Vanessa Fields
Subject:	Fwd: Quick Question
Date:	Monday, October 30, 2017 2:47:16 PM

Looks like we'll have the conference call at 10 am tomorrow.

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Bernie Petersen** <bernie_petersen@fws.gov>
Date: Mon, Oct 30, 2017 at 2:44 PM
Subject: RE: Quick Question
To: Bernardo Garza <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>

Let's shoot for 10

Bernard J Petersen

Refuge Supervisor for Colorado,Montana, Utah, Wyoming

US Fish and Wildlife Service Region 6

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From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Monday, October 30, 2017 2:43 PM
To: Bernie Petersen
Subject: Re: Quick Question

Would 10 or 10:30 am work for you?

On Mon, Oct 30, 2017 at 2:32 PM, Bernie Petersen <bernie_petersen@fws.gov> wrote:

I am going to be tied up this afternoon but we could talk in the morning

Bernard J Petersen

Refuge Supervisor for Colorado,Montana, Utah, Wyoming

US Fish and Wildlife Service Region 6

National Wildlife Refuge System

303-236-4310 W

720-708-8026 Cell

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Monday, October 30, 2017 2:25 PM
To: Bernie Petersen
Cc: Vanessa Fields
Subject: Re: Quick Question

Bernie,

Do you think you, Vanessa and I could have a quick conference call yet today?

On Mon, Oct 30, 2017 at 1:53 PM, Bernie Petersen <bernie_petersen@fws.gov> wrote:

This was just a quick meeting to introduce Vanessa to the staff before the formal meeting in Polson. You don't need to cram your schedules to make it here just for that. Is there a need to get together prior to the start of the meeting on Tuesday?

Bernard J Petersen

Refuge Supervisor for Colorado,Montana, Utah, Wyoming

US Fish and Wildlife Service Region 6

National Wildlife Refuge System

303-236-4310 W

720-708-8026 Cell

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Monday, October 30, 2017 1:45 PM
To: Bernie Petersen
Subject: Quick Question

Hello Bernie,

Regarding next Monday's meeting with NBR staff, did you have a time of day and meeting length in mind?

Kelly, Matt and I are trying to figure out our travel to make it to the meeting, but there aren't many options.

Would it work for you and the staff if we arrived at NBR @ 2:45 pm for the meeting on Monday?

Please advise so we can finalize tweaking our travel plans

--

Bernardo Garza

Planning Team Leader

Branch of Policy and Planning

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region

Office (303) 236-4377

Fax (303) 236-4792

--

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Planning Team Leader
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Fax (303) 236-4792

From:	Fields, Vanessa
To:	Bernie Petersen
Cc:	Garza, Bernardo
Subject:	Draft agenda for Vision and Goals workshop
Date:	Monday, October 30, 2017 3:21:59 PM
Attachments:	NBRC Purposes Vision and Goals Wkshp.docx

Hi Bernie-

I have a note I made to myself to send you a draft agenda for Tuesday's workshop - I can't remember if you requested that or I just thought it might be a good idea? Either way, I thought it might be useful for our call tomorrow - or just disregard if you weren't worried about it.

Talk to you tomorrow!

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

National Bison Range Complex

Comprehensive Conservation Plans

Purposes, Vision, and Goals Workshop

Date: November 7, 2017

Place: Red Lion Inn Hotel, Polson, Montana

Workshop Purposes

- Revisit and clarify the purposes for which the units of the National Bison Range Complex (Complex) were established
- Develop working list of Qualities and review Issues raised during scoping period
- Collaboratively generate a Vision Statement that is congruent with the Service's mission and values and the purposes of the units of the Complex
- Collaboratively develop a set of Goals that will assist in attaining the Vision

8:30 am Welcome, personal introductions, review agenda, logistics and workshop purposes

8:45 am Review Service's and Refuge System Missions, and Purposes for each unit of the Complex

9:15 am Group Discussion: What are the qualities that make the Complex/planning area special and unique?

9:45 am Group Discussion: Review (and update as needed) list of issues raised during scoping process

10:15 am SHORT BREAK

10:30 am Introduction to and Development of a Vision Statement

- Define a vision statement and review model statements
- Discuss/vote on process for generating vision statement
- Develop draft vision statement
  - Break into Small Groups – Each Group Creates a Draft Vision Statement
  - Small Groups Present Draft Vision Statements
  - Vote: Whole Group Provides Feedback and Selects Draft Vision Statement to use as a Base for Further Development
    - What did you like about the vision statement chosen? Are there definite "keeper phrases"?
    - What important ideas from other statements should also be included?
- Refine draft Vision Statement and check if statement meets requirements

12:30 pm LUNCH BREAK (we plan to order-in from MacKenzie River Pizza)

1:00 pm Introduction to Goals

- Define goals, brainstorm list of necessary goals to develop, *and process for generating draft goals*

1:30 pm Break into Small Groups to Develop Draft Goals

- Small groups are assigned by duties/expertise to develop goals for specific topics

3:00 pm Small Groups Present Draft Goals

3:30 pm Refinement of Draft Goals

- Whole group comments on goals. Finalize most goals; get input for any future revisions

4:30 pm Recap and Next Steps

- Products from this workshop
- Where do we go from here?

5:00 pm Adjourn Workshop

From:	Fields, Vanessa
To:	Bernie Petersen
Cc:	Garza, Bernardo
Subject:	Draft agenda for Vision and Goals workshop
Date:	Monday, October 30, 2017 3:22:44 PM
Attachments:	NBRC Purposes Vision and Goals Wkshp.docx

Hi Bernie-

I have a note I made to myself to send you a draft agenda for Tuesday's workshop - I can't remember if you requested that or I just thought it might be a good idea? Either way, I thought it might be useful for our call tomorrow - or just disregard if you weren't worried about it.

Talk to you tomorrow!

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Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

National Bison Range Complex

Comprehensive Conservation Plans

Purposes, Vision, and Goals Workshop

Date: November 7, 2017

Place: Red Lion Inn Hotel, Polson, Montana

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4:30 pm Recap and Next Steps

- Products from this workshop
- Where do we go from here?

5:00 pm Adjourn Workshop

From: Bernie Petersen
To: Vanessa Fields
Subject: RE: Draft agenda for Vision and Goals workshop
Date: Monday, October 30, 2017 4:09:26 PM

We did discuss and you did say you would send it. Thank you.

Bernard J Petersen
Refuge Supervisor for Colorado,Montana, Utah, Wyoming
US Fish and Wildlife Service Region 6
National Wildlife Refuge System

303-236-4310 W
720-708-8026 Cell

From: Fields, Vanessa [mailto:vanessa_fields@fws.gov]
Sent: Monday, October 30, 2017 3:22 PM
To: Bernie Petersen
Cc: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Draft agenda for Vision and Goals workshop

Hi Bernie-

I have a note I made to myself to send you a draft agenda for Tuesday's workshop - I can't remember if you requested that or I just thought it might be a good idea? Either way, I thought it might be useful for our call tomorrow - or just disregard if you weren't worried about it.

Talk to you tomorrow!

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Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Redhorse, David
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: National Bison Range Complex CCPs Purposes, Vision and Goals Workshop
Date: Wednesday, November 1, 2017 10:05:39 AM

Unfortunately, I cannot attend this workshop. The meeting conflicts with a previous scheduled work sessions that begins Tuesday afternoon in Portland. I can call in for Tuesday morning if telephone conference is available.

On Fri, Sep 29, 2017 at 1:28 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Dear Cooperators,
>
> We will hold the NBR Complex CCPs Purposes, Vision and Goals Workshop at the Red Lion Inn in Polson on Tuesday, November 7, 2017.
>
> This will be an all-day workshop (8:30 am - 5:00 pm). I'll send you the agenda for the workshop as soon as it is ready.
>
> Please mark your calendars and let me know if you have any questions.
>
> I look forward to seeing all of you in Polson in November.
>
> Have a great weekend
>
> --
> **Bernardo Garza**
> **Planning Team Leader**
> **Branch of Policy and Planning**
> **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region**
> **Office (303) 236-4377**
> **Fax (303) 236-4792**

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Redhorse, David
Subject: Re: National Bison Range Complex CCPs Purposes, Vision and Goals Workshop
Date: Wednesday, November 1, 2017 1:01:51 PM

Hello David,

Sorry to hear that you won't be able to participate in next week's workshop.

I don't know the hotel meeting room's conference call capabilities. But, even with such capabilities, I don't know how we could bring you into the conversation without boring you to death... It's up to you, but I can't imagine how difficult it would be for you to sit by your phone listening to the planning team work hour after hour in developing a vision and then goals. Plus, as you will see in the agenda I'll be sending to everyone in the planning team, we will be dividing into small working teams or groups to develop the vision and the goals.

Once again, if you would like to participate via conference call I could contact the hotel to see if the meeting room has that capability. Just let me know.

Thanks,

Bernardo

On Wed, Nov 1, 2017 at 10:05 AM, Redhorse, David <david.redhorse@bia.gov> wrote:

> Unfortunately, I cannot attend this workshop. The meeting conflicts with a previous scheduled work sessions that begins Tuesday afternoon in Portland. I can call in for Tuesday morning if telephone conference is available.
>
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> > --
> > **Bernardo Garza**
> > **Planning Team Leader**
> > **Branch of Policy and Planning**
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> > **Office (303) 236-4377**
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--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
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From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Neil Anderson; Gale Decker; Jennifer Ekberg; Brian Upton; David Redhorse
Subject:	Fwd: National Bison Range Complex CCPs Purposes, Vision and Goals Workshop
Date:	Wednesday, November 1, 2017 1:08:35 PM
Attachments:	NBRC Purposes Vision and Goals Wkshp.docx

Dear Cooperators,

I'm attaching here the agenda for next week's workshop in Polson.

I hope this email message finds you well and ready to participate in the Purposes, Vision and Goals for the comprehensive conservation plan for the National Bison Range Complex.

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Bernardo Garza

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Garza, Bernardo** <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>
Date: Fri, Sep 29, 2017 at 2:28 PM
Subject: National Bison Range Complex CCPs Purposes, Vision and Goals Workshop
To: Brian Upton <brian.upton@cskt.org>, David Redhorse <david.redhorse@bia.gov>, Gale Decker <gdecker@lakemt.gov>, Jennifer Ekberg <jekberg@co.sanders.mt.us>, Neil Anderson <nanderson@mt.gov>

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Bernardo Garza
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--
Bernardo Garza
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National Bison Range Complex

Comprehensive Conservation Plans

Purposes, Vision, and Goals Workshop

Date: November 7, 2017

Place: Red Lion Inn Hotel, Polson, Montana

Workshop Purposes

- Revisit and clarify the purposes for which the units of the National Bison Range Complex (Complex) were established
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4:30 pm Recap and Next Steps

- Products from this workshop
- Where do we go from here?

5:00 pm Adjourn Workshop

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Vanessa Fields
Subject:	Fwd: Coop Agencies Contact Information
Date:	Wednesday, November 1, 2017 3:00:10 PM

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Garza, Bernardo** <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>
Date: Wed, Nov 1, 2017 at 1:22 PM
Subject: Coop Agencies Contact Information
To: Bernie Petersen <bernie_petersen@fws.gov>

Bernie,

Per our conference call:

CSKT: Brian Upton, Attorney, Legal Department, (406) 675-2700 x 1165, brian.upton@cskt.org

BIA NW Region: David Redhorse, Natural Resources Officer, (503) 231-6883, david.redhorse@bia.gov

MT Fish, Wildlife and Parks: Neil Anderson, Wildlife Program Manager, (406) 751-4585, nanderson@mt.gov

Lake County: Gale Decker, Commissioner, District 3, (406) 883-7204, lakecommissioners@lakemt.gov

Sanders County: Glen E. Magera, Commissioner, District 3, (406) 827-6942, gmagera@co.sanders.mt.us

By the way, David Redhorse contacted me today to tell me that he won't be able to attend next week's workshop. But he should also be contacted to inform him of your detail to NBR.

Thanks

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From:	Brian Upton
To:	Garza, Bernardo
Subject:	RE: National Bison Range Complex CCPs Purposes, Vision and Goals Workshop
Date:	Wednesday, November 1, 2017 3:41:39 PM

Thanks Bernardo

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, November 01, 2017 1:09 PM
To: Neil Anderson; Gale Decker; Jennifer Ekberg; Brian Upton; David Redhorse
Subject: Fwd: National Bison Range Complex CCPs Purposes, Vision and Goals Workshop

Dear Cooperators,

I'm attaching here the agenda for next week's workshop in Polson.

I hope this email message finds you well and ready to participate in the Purposes, Vision and Goals for the comprehensive conservation plan for the National Bison Range Complex.

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Bernardo Garza

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From: **Garza, Bernardo** <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>
Date: Fri, Sep 29, 2017 at 2:28 PM
Subject: National Bison Range Complex CCPs Purposes, Vision and Goals Workshop
To: Brian Upton <brian.upton@cskt.org>, David Redhorse <david.redhorse@bia.gov>, Gale Decker <gdecker@lakemt.gov>, Jennifer Ekberg <jekberg@co.sanders.mt.us>, Neil Anderson <nanderson@mt.gov>

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Have a great weekend

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Bernardo Garza
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--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
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From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Vanessa Fields; Kelly Hogan; McCollister, Matthew
Subject:	Fwd: Power Point presentation
Date:	Thursday, November 9, 2017 10:54:43 AM

FYI folks

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Gale Decker** <gdecker@lakemt.gov>
Date: Wed, Nov 8, 2017 at 10:43 AM
Subject: Power Point presentation
To: "Garza, Bernardo (bernardo_garza@fws.gov)" <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>

Bernado,

Thank you for facilitating the meeting yesterday in writing draft vision and goals for the NBR Complex. One of the slides in your power point presentation stated that the Pablo National Wildlife Refuge is "located on tribal trust land." Lake County is of the opinion that the statement is inaccurate and can document the inaccuracy of the statement. The statement is important and should be fact checked.

Thanks,

Gale Decker

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

SIGN-IN SHEET

National Bison Range Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plans

Purposes, Vision, and Goals Development Workshop

November 7, 2017, Polson, Montana

Name	Affiliation
Bernardo Garza	USFWS
Vanessa Fields	USFWS
Dale Becker	C.S.K.T
BRIAN UPTON	CSKT
Tom Reed	USFWS
Kevin J. Shinn	USFWS - Lost Trail
BERNIE PETERSEN	US FWS - BO - Acting NBR
Rob Bundy	USFWS - Benton Lake NWR Complex
Kelly Hogan	USFWS
Martin McDonald	USFWS
[illegible]	USFWS
[illegible]	USFWS
Amy Lisk	USFWS
Pat Jamieson	Lake Cty
Wally [illegible]	Lake Cty
GALE DECKER	LAKE COUNTY
Beverly Skinner	USFWS - Lost trail
Dennis Clairmont	CSKT Council

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Gale Decker
Subject:	Re: sign in sheet vison and goal workshop
Date:	Thursday, November 9, 2017 10:57:45 AM
Attachments:	SignInSheet_VGworkshop110717.pdf

Gale,

Per your request, I'm attaching here the sign in sheet for this week's workshop in Polson.

Bernardo

On Wed, Nov 8, 2017 at 10:26 AM, Gale Decker <gdecker@lakemt.gov> wrote:

> Bernado,
>
> Would it be possible to get a scanned copy of the sign in sheet for yesterday's working meeting? Thanks, Gale Decker

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Policy and Planning
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Brian Upton
Subject: Re: cooperating agencies MOU signature
Date: Thursday, November 9, 2017 1:08:42 PM

Sanders County still needs to sign it...

Is the Sanders County municipal building very far from your commute?

Otherwise, BIA also needs to sign it. If the Sander County building is not an option, would you perhaps minding sending it to Mr. David Redhorse in Portland?

Here's the address:

David Redhorse, Natural Resources Officer
Bureau of Indian Affairs, Northwest Regional Office
911 NE 11th Avenue
Portland OR 97232

Let me know if either one of these options work for you.

Thank you very much Brian

On Thu, Nov 9, 2017 at 12:28 PM, Brian Upton <Brian.Upton@cskt.org> wrote:

> Thanks Bernie. Bernardo, should I just FedEx this to your attention so you can timely proceed with collecting the other signatures? Or would you prefer I just hand-deliver it to Bernie when he returns to the Bison Range on November 30th?
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Bernie Petersen [mailto:bernie_petersen@fws.gov]
> **Sent:** Thursday, November 09, 2017 12:22 PM
> **To:** Brian Upton
> **Subject:** RE: cooperating agencies MOU signature
>
> Brian,
>
> I am going to be out for the next couple weeks returning in the office on the 30th, unless I get delayed by bad weather. If you want to drop off the letter you can leave it with Karen our Admin person or just hang on to it until I return.
>
> Thanks for checking.

Bernard J Petersen

Refuge Supervisor for Colorado,Montana, Utah, Wyoming

US Fish and Wildlife Service Region 6

National Wildlife Refuge System

303-236-4310 W

720-708-8026 Cell

From: Brian Upton [mailto:Brian.Upton@cskt.org]
Sent: Thursday, November 09, 2017 10:51 AM
To: bernie_petersen@fws.gov
Cc: Bernardo Garza (bernardo_garza@fws.gov)
Subject: cooperating agencies MOU signature

Hi Bernie,

Per Bernardo's request, I was able to get Chairman Finley's signature on the original signature page for the cooperating agencies MOU. Would you be around Monday morning, sometime around 8:45-9:15am, for me to drop it off to you at your office on my way to work? If not, let me know when may be a good time to get it to you next week.

Thanks,

BU

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Brian Upton
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: RE: cooperating agencies MOU signature
Date: Thursday, November 9, 2017 1:29:46 PM

Hi Bernardo,

The Sanders County courthouse (and the County Commissioners) are in Thompson Falls, which is an hour drive each way. I'll just express mail the signature page to David Redhorse at the address you gave below. I'll need a phone number for the FedEx form – can you get me his phone number? I don't have it.

Thanks,
BU

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Thursday, November 09, 2017 1:09 PM
To: Brian Upton
Subject: Re: cooperating agencies MOU signature

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From: Brian Upton [mailto:Brian.Upton@cskt.org]
Sent: Thursday, November 09, 2017 10:51 AM
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Bernardo Garza
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Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Brian Upton
Subject: Re: cooperating agencies MOU signature
Date: Thursday, November 9, 2017 1:54:45 PM

Thank you very much Brian.

The phone number listed for David Redhorse is: 503-231-6883

On Thu, Nov 9, 2017 at 1:29 PM, Brian Upton <Brian.Upton@cskt.org> wrote:

> Hi Bernardo,
>
> The Sanders County courthouse (and the County Commissioners) are in Thompson Falls, which is an hour drive each way. I'll just express mail the signature page to David Redhorse at the address you gave below. I'll need a phone number for the FedEx form – can you get me his phone number? I don't have it.
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> **From:** Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
> **Sent:** Thursday, November 09, 2017 1:09 PM
> **To:** Brian Upton
> **Subject:** Re: cooperating agencies MOU signature
>
> Sanders County still needs to sign it...
>
> Is the Sanders County municipal building very far from your commute?
>
> Otherwise, BIA also needs to sign it. If the Sander County building is not an option, would you perhaps minding sending it to Mr. David Redhorse in Portland?
>
> Here's the address:

David Redhorse, Natural Resources Officer

Bureau of Indian Affairs, Northwest Regional Office

911 NE 11th Avenue

Portland OR 97232

Let me know if either one of these options work for you.

Thank you very much Brian

On Thu, Nov 9, 2017 at 12:28 PM, Brian Upton <Brian.Upton@cskt.org> wrote:

Thanks Bernie. Bernardo, should I just FedEx this to your attention so you can timely proceed with collecting the other signatures? Or would you prefer I just hand-deliver it to Bernie when he returns to the Bison Range on November 30th?

From: Bernie Petersen [mailto:bernie_petersen@fws.gov]
Sent: Thursday, November 09, 2017 12:22 PM
To: Brian Upton
Subject: RE: cooperating agencies MOU signature

Brian,

I am going to be out for the next couple weeks returning in the office on the 30th, unless I get delayed by bad weather. If you want to drop off the letter you can leave it with Karen our Admin person or just hang on to it until I return.

Thanks for checking.

Bernard J Petersen

Refuge Supervisor for Colorado,Montana, Utah, Wyoming

US Fish and Wildlife Service Region 6

National Wildlife Refuge System

303-236-4310 W

720-708-8026 Cell

From: Brian Upton [mailto:Brian.Upton@cskt.org]
Sent: Thursday, November 09, 2017 10:51 AM
To: bernie_petersen@fws.gov
Cc: Bernardo Garza (bernardo_garza@fws.gov)
Subject: cooperating agencies MOU signature

Hi Bernie,

Per Bernardo's request, I was able to get Chairman Finley's signature on the original signature page for the cooperating agencies MOU. Would you be around Monday morning, sometime around 8:45-9:15am, for me to drop it off to you at your office on my way to work? If not, let me know when may be a good time to get it to you next week.

Thanks,

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--

Bernardo Garza

Planning Team Leader

Branch of Planning and Policy

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region

Office (303) 236-4377

Fax (303) 236-4792

--

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Planning Team Leader
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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
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Fax (303) 236-4792

From:	Brian Upton
To:	Garza, Bernardo
Subject:	RE: cooperating agencies MOU signature
Date:	Thursday, November 9, 2017 2:25:30 PM

Thanks Bernardo. It won't be able to go out until next Monday, but we'll send it by express courier to David.

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
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Subject: Re: cooperating agencies MOU signature

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From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Brian Upton
Subject: Re: cooperating agencies MOU signature
Date: Thursday, November 9, 2017 2:27:25 PM

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NATIONAL BISON RANGE NWR COMPLEX

DRAFT VISION STATEMENT

Relax and take a deep breath while you step back in time to reflect on what was, what is and what is yet to come. Immerse yourself in the inter-montane valleys of northwestern Montana shaped by glacial forces and steeped in rich cultural history.

This is a special landscape important to people age after age, where we pay tribute to the persons and peoples who set aside the lands, conserved the wildlife and plants, and were stewards of various components that make up the complex.

Visitors from all over the world travel to the NBRC which seeks to provide an opportunity to learn and experience varied habitats, abundant wildlife and the natural beauty of these lands.

NBRC safeguards these values and preserves connectivity across the landscape, forming continuity through time for future generations to treasure.

Each unit is unique, and collectively they have, and will continue, to contribute to the NBRC and the NWRS.

Partners foster cultural and natural resources conservation where the cultural history is expressed across the landscape. Unique opportunities to work with partners benefit many of the units within the Flathead Indian Reservation and other units located within traditional homelands of the Salish, Upper Pend d'Oreille, and Kootenai Tribes.

~~Acknowledge the uniqueness of each as a part of the National Wildlife Refuge System and the contributions of each component to the Complex, and implement appropriate diversified management actions.~~

~~Manage each unit for its uniqueness and its relevance to the NWRS.~~

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Diane Emmons
Subject:	Draft Vision and Goals - NBRC
Date:	Tuesday, November 14, 2017 10:26:27 AM
Attachments:	NBRC_draftGoals_110717.docx NBRC_draftVision_110717.docx

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Per your request

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
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National Bison Range NWR Complex
Draft Goals

Cultural Resources Goal

Preserve and value the cultural resources and history of the National Bison Range Complex to connect staff, visitors, and community to the area's past and continuing traditions.

Partnerships and Collaboration Goal

Maintain and cultivate partnerships that help achieve the vision and supporting goals and objectives of the National Bison Range Complex to support wildlife and habitat conservation, research, foster awareness and appreciation of natural and cultural resources and provide education along with all necessary infrastructure of the inter-montane ecosystem of western Montana.

Recognizing its importance, we will collaborate with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and other Tribal governments in a manner consistent with the Service's Native American policy and with other Federal, State, and local government entities in a manner consistent with applicable Service policies.

Public Use Goal

Provide compatible, wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities, for persons of all abilities, to learn, enjoy, and appreciate the inter-montane landscape of western Montana, the fish and wildlife and plants.

Wildlife Management Goal

Protect, maintain, and restore healthy and diverse wildlife populations with respect to species that are endemic, migratory, and mandated species of concern.

Invasive Species Goal

Prevent, reduce, and contain the invasion and spread of noxious, invasive, and harmful nonnative species within the Complex while working with partners to address off-Complex infestations within the surrounding landscape.

Habitat Management Goal

Conserve, restore, and promote biological integrity in functional and sustainable ecologically diverse habitats of the inter-montane ecosystem of western Montana

Research and Science Goal

Encourage high quality research and promote the use of scientifically sound management decisions.

Administration and Operations Goal

Effectively use funding, staff, partnerships, volunteers, and equipment to restore and manage Complex habitats, conduct programs, and improve and maintain all necessary infrastructure to the benefit of the Complex and the Refuge System.

Monitoring and Adaptive Management Goal

Through the life of this plan, we will monitor and evaluate the consequences of our actions and use adaptive management to reach desired outcomes.

From: Vanessa Fields
To: bernardo_garza@fws.gov
Subject: Ccp stuff
Date: Wednesday, November 15, 2017 8:31:05 AM

Good morning!

Catching each other on the phone this week may be a challenge....my first question is what the latest is on scheduling the alternatives workshop? Are we still thinking mid to late February? Are Kelly and others like Will good with that? Are we going to try to get it scheduled before or after Thanksgiving?

I am thinking in December I would like to get a work plan and communication plan finalized and probably get a planning update on Vision/Goals out the door.

Another idea I have been thinking about is setting up a regular CCP call with the NBRC staff - maybe every two weeks?

What do you think of these ideas?

Sent from my iPhone

From: Vanessa Fields
To: bernardo_garza@fws.gov
Subject: Ccp stuff
Date: Wednesday, November 15, 2017 8:31:11 AM

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Sent from my iPhone

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Vanessa Fields
Subject: Re: Ccp stuff
Date: Wednesday, November 15, 2017 3:26:35 PM

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I'm sorry that I couldn't respond to your email earlier than now, but I was asked to give priority to Planning's response to PEER's FOIA request, and I just finished doing that.

I really like your ideas and concur with your recommendations.

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I'll be in my office all of tomorrow and Friday. Maybe, when you find the time, you could email me a time when we could have a conference call in the next couple of days.

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Office (303) 236-4377
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From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Vanessa Fields
Subject: Re: Ccp stuff
Date: Wednesday, November 15, 2017 3:26:38 PM

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Date: Thursday, November 16, 2017 8:40:38 AM

Shall we try 1pm today? If you can do it a little earlier, let me know.

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Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Vanessa Fields
Subject: Re: Ccp stuff
Date: Thursday, November 16, 2017 9:01:13 AM

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From: Garza, Bernardo
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Subject: Re: Ccp stuff
Date: Thursday, November 16, 2017 10:35:58 AM

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From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Vanessa Fields
Subject: Re: Potentially bad news...
Date: Thursday, November 16, 2017 4:36:18 PM

I just spoke with Will and he wants to be present for the workshop. I told him of the two possible weeks when we could do the workshop and he told me to finalize the dates as soon as possible so he can block those days in his calendar.

So I'll speak with Kelly tomorrow and then will call Bernie to see if any of those weeks work him and the NBRC staff.

I'll keep you posted.

On Thu, Nov 16, 2017 at 2:45 PM, Vanessa Fields <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> I think we make this Will's call - if he absolutely wants to be there, then I think that trumps everything. Even if a tricky NEPA question comes up without Kelly there, we can always table it or make a 'temporary decision ' until we can do some research....also the contractors will be there with their expertise too...
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> On Nov 16, 2017, at 2:19 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> > Hi Vanessa,
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> > I have what might be bad news.
> >
> > I checked Will's calendar for the first three months of next year and he is absolutely unavailable to participate in the Alternatives Workshop any time after the week of Feb. 12 (and I doubt that he would want to miss Valentine's day with his wife to travel to MT during that week). He is booked solid with multi-day meetings until the week of March 27, and I don't want to wait that long to carry out the workshop.
> >
> > So, if Will really wants to participate in the Alternatives Workshop, and we want to be well prepared for it, we will need to forgo having Kelly present, and carry out the workshop on the week of Jan. 29 or the week of Feb. 5.
> >
> > Thoughts and/or suggestions?
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National Bison Range Complex
Comprehensive Conservation Plans

Scoping Report

Introduction

In 2017, Region 6 of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) published three Notices of Intent (NOI) in the Federal Register (FR) announcing the development of comprehensive conservation plans (CCP) for the units of the National Bison Range Complex (Complex) in Montana.

The first NOI was published in the FR on January 18, 2017, and announced the Service's intent to develop a CCP for the National Bison Range. This NOI informed the public of three management alternatives being considered by the Service: A) Current Management—continuing current management and serving as a baseline for comparing other the other alternatives; B) Preferred Management Option—recommending a Congressional transfer of the NBR to the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) of the Flathead Reservation; and, C) Executing and carrying out a draft negotiated Annual Funding Agreement with the CSKT per the Tribal Self Governance Act.

The second NOI was published in the FR on May 18, 2017. This NOI announced the Service's revision of the original January 2017 FR notice. The NOI provided additional opportunities for public input and stated the Service's intent to continue the development of a CCP for the NBR while announcing a change in policy direction regarding the legislative transfer of the NBR.

The third NOI was published in the FR on May 18, 2017. This NOI announced the Service's intent to gather information to prepare a CCP for Lost Trail, Ninepipe, and Pablo National Wildlife Refuges, and the Northwest Montana Wetland Management Districts in Lake and Sounders Counties, Montana.

To date, the Service has received hundreds of comments in response to the three NOIs and to the information provided during the four public scoping meetings held throughout the planning area. For ease of use, this report is divided in three parts, according to the three NOIs mentioned, and provides a summary of the comments, in table format, organized according to distinct categories.

Because the January 2017 and May 2017 NOIs announced different actions by the Service the nature of the comments received was different as well. Therefore, this report has a slight difference in how it provides the reader the summary of the comments received.

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Summary of Comments Related to the First Notice of Intent (January 18, 2017)

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

Summary: Encourage an ecologically intact ecosystem based on healthy rangeland as a foundation for supporting herds of healthy bison and other species such as elk, deer, big horn sheep and other big game and wide roaming species and would include such issues as: herd size targets/culling plans; general health monitoring and management; genetics; as well as other general management issues. Address predator management (including, among other species, black bear, grizzly bear, gray wolf, coyote, mountain lion, golden eagle, and bald eagle) and their role in controlling herd size and risk of disease and its spread, especially CWD. The CCP and EIS needs to address the potential of the NBR to serve as grizzly bear habitat, including transient habitat and connectivity to other occupied and unoccupied areas.

Key Comments:

Although the NBR is managed largely for the bison herd, the CCP should also consider the health of the rangeland for elk, deer, big horn sheep and other big game and wide roaming species.
The CCP and EIS needs to address the potential of the NBR to serve as grizzly bear habitat, including transient habitat and connectivity to other occupied and unoccupied areas consistent with the NCDE Conservation Strategy. This may include the NBR as well as coordinating with neighboring residents.
Encourage an ecologically intact ecosystem based on healthy rangeland as a foundation for supporting herds of healthy bison and other species at sustainable population levels and envision the presence and tolerance of predators and carnivores as an important element in controlling herd size and the risk of disease and its spread, especially CWD.

The Tribes would also expect that predator management (including, among other species, black bear, grizzly bear, gray wolf, coyote, mountain lion, golden eagle, and bald eagle) would be addressed by the CCP.

BISON MANAGEMENT

Summary: The CCP must consider how the genetic integrity of the bison herd will be maintained for the long term. The current USFWS genetic and health monitoring program should be continued, in part or whole, as part of the management plan for NBR. This should be part of a greater landscape conservation effort. Encourage the CCP to consider opportunities for bison to access areas that may be available adjacent to the NBR.

Key Comments:

Encourage the CCP to consider opportunities for bison to access areas that may be available adjacent to the NBR. We recommend that a quality and genetically reputable herd be maintained by CSKT at NBR. The CCP must consider how the genetic integrity of this herd will be maintained for the long term. The current USFWS genetic and health monitoring program should be continued, in part or whole, as part of the management plan for NBR. How this program is to be cooperatively administered and implemented by CSKT and DOI should be explained in the planning process.

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Given the National Bison Range's purpose for establishment of preserving the American bison, it seems appropriate to consider the refuge's role in biological diversity and ecosystem management where purity of genetic strains of bison are preserved for restoration of herds at various locations of the Great Plains. This would be part of a greater landscape conservation effort.

The Tribes expect that bison and big game species management would be prominently addressed in the CCP. This management, including for bighorn sheep, elk and deer, would include such issues as: herd size targets/culling plans; general health monitoring and management; genetics; as well as other general management issues. Each large mammal population on the NBR should be addressed in reasonable detail, providing a documented historical outline for each species on the NBR. This should include population origin, relevant objectives, past methods used to maintain the population within objective targets, methods for dealing with disease outbreaks, and other life-history data of importance. Summaries should be included for the formal and informal research and wildlife management studies that have been completed, and all studies currently underway. These facts should thus form the basis for discussion of alternative management strategies later in the CCP.

The CCP should provide a detailed history of the origins and original purposes for establishing the NBR along with facts on the founding animals and respective bloodlines of those founders. The NBR's founding bison have a complex lineage and documented interactions with other major lineages. Those factors should be thoroughly discussed. Past inadvertent cattle introgression, potential for future genetic drift, strengths and deficiencies of current genetic testing techniques and related topics should be presented. Disease possibilities and protocols for periodic testing along with methodologies for handling sudden outbreaks should be elaborated.

The founding of a bison metapopulation in 2009 along with a basic operating protocol for such management and its primary objectives is a very important topic for the CCP. The central role of NBR bison in that metapopulation model is an essential feature of all Fish and Wildlife Service bison herds. It is, therefore, highly important that a thorough discussion be included in the background information of the CCP.

HABITAT MANAGEMENT

Summary: Range condition, weed management, pine encroachment, forest habitat management, fire management, riparian management, wetland management, and water management issues are all components of habitat management that should be addressed in the CCP. A solid discussion of internal fencing/pastures within NBR should be included. Diverse habitats should be inventoried, mapped and maintained and the NBR should be managed to increase underrepresented habitat types typical of historic vegetation.

Key Comments:

Diverse habitats should be inventoried, mapped and maintained and the NBR should be managed to increase underrepresented habitat types typical of historic vegetation.

Encourage addressing the role of fire and other disturbances in maintaining the native vegetation
Range condition, weed management, pine encroachment, forest habitat management, fire management, riparian management, wetland management, and water management issues are all components of habitat management that should be addressed in the CCP.

The internal fencing/pastures within NBR constitute a vital component permitting that more intensive management. A solid discussion related to these subjects is called for in the CCP.

INVASIVE SPECIES

Summary: Invasive species issues (including both terrestrial and aquatic) should be identified and prioritized and there should be an early detection, rapid response plan as well as a plan to control existing infestations and reduce the occurrence and spread.

Key Comments:

Invasive species issues should be identified and prioritized and there should be an early detection, rapid response plan as well as a plan to control existing infestations and reduce the occurrence and spread.

The Tribes believe that the CCP should address contingencies for aquatic invasive species, whose profile has recently been elevated in Montana.

Additionally, invasive species are a recognized problem on the NBR. For the refuge to maintain and protect the vital native grasslands, particularly key species of fescue and other native grasses along with its other vital components, it must design and conduct a carefully planned, assiduously implemented "integrated pest management program" annually. Such a program is labor intensive and requires involved technicians to have formal training, proper equipment, and important knowledge of the target species and any potential or listed threatened or endangered native species that could be affected.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Summary: A major complicating factor that must be thoroughly addressed in the CCP is the expected features and likely impacts to be expected from the effects of Climate Change on habitat, species (fauna and flora), water, forage and wild fire impacts. The Tribes would ask the Service to take into consideration the Tribes' Climate Change Strategic Plan, which was adopted in September 2013 and is available at www.csktribes.org/CSKTClimatePlan.pdf

Key Comments:

In order to effectively look forward as a planning document, the CCP should address projected, likely, or potential impacts of climate change on habitat, species (fauna and flora), water, forage and wild fire impacts. The Tribes would ask the Service to take into consideration the Tribes' Climate Change Strategic Plan, which was adopted in September 2013 and is available at [www.csktribes.org/CSKTClimatePlan.pdf].

Climate change could affect habitat, species, the amount and quality of water, and the availability of forage. Resulting high intensity wild fire can threaten forest ecosystems and impact soil and water quality. Species migration into the area can increase competition for grasses and forage. Please address and consider impacts of climate change on rangeland and other ecosystems and wildlife habitat.

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A major complicating factor that must be thoroughly addressed in the CCP is the expected features and likely impacts to be expected from the effects of Climate Change. It is likely that some subtle, but important changes have already begun to affect the NBR plants and animals. The Coordinating Team should consist of expert wildlife, plant, disease, genetic, and ecosystem specialists from agencies such as the State Fish and Game Department, State agricultural agency, USGS Biological Division, Natural Resources Conservation Service, USFS, County officials, the University of Montana, and others in order to have the expertise necessary for identifying and analyzing available data along with interpreting models of expected climate changes in Western Montana and the Mission Valley in particular.

MONITORING AND RESEARCH

Summary: We encourage the CCP to identify opportunities for research. These could include ecological conditions, diversity of plants and animals on the bison range, role of carnivore in population and disease control, role of wildfire and other disturbance regimes in grassland health and maintenance and diversity of habitat, presence and control of weeds and other invasive species, among other things. The CCP should include a plan for research and partnering with institutions and agencies both on and off the reservation. The Tribes further recommend that the CCP address surveying and monitoring of nongame birds, as well as amphibians and reptiles.

Key Comments:

We expect the CCP to identify monitoring elements to evaluate rangeland conditions and carrying capacity, as well as the health of the bison herd and other species including elk, deer, and bighorn sheep. Again, we are concerned about CWD and encourage a proactive plan to address this disease.

We encourage the CCP to identify opportunities for research. These could include ecological conditions, diversity of plants and animals on the bison range, role of carnivore in population and disease control, role of wildfire and other disturbance regimes in grassland health and maintenance and diversity of habitat, presence and control of weeds and other invasive species, among other things. The CCP should include a plan for research and partnering with institutions and agencies both on and off the reservation.

The Tribes further recommend that the CCP address surveying and monitoring of nongame birds, as well as amphibians and reptiles.

VISITOR SERVICES

Summary: The CCP provides an opportunity to examine and plan for such public use/access considerations as: visitation projections; desired visitor experiences; fishing access; wildlife watching and photography opportunities; recreation site (picnic areas) availability and management; fee structures; and the possibility of tours.

Key Comments:

In addition to maintenance and replacement of facilities including the visitor center, roads, entrances and the installation and content of signage, visitor services should include maintaining access for the public. Opportunities for education are also important visitor services. Topics could range from cultural to factors that comprise a healthy and functioning ecosystem.

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The CCP provides an opportunity to examine and plan for such public use/access considerations as: visitation projections; desired visitor experiences; fishing access; wildlife watching and photography opportunities; recreation site (picnic areas) availability and management; fee structures; and the possibility of tours.
The Tribes anticipate that the CCP would address the following issues related to visitor services:

- •current state of, and future outlook for, the visitor center, including need and potential for replacement;
- •access considerations, including potential for an additional, or alternate, entrance such as at Ravalli Hill;
- •interpretive displays, materials and sale items;
- •information availability and standards/criteria for inclusion of information/materials;
- •education, public awareness, programs and presentations;
- •receipt collection and accountability; and
- •staffing and volunteers

TRIBAL COOPERATION/CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

Summary: We also encourage consideration of the benefits of the Tribes' traditional ecological and cultural knowledge and their special historical, geographic, and cultural relationships with bison and the Range insofar as those deep connections can support the management of natural and cultural resources and the provision of unique public educational and interpretive services at the NBR. Federal laws mandate that the FWS must recognize its responsibility to identify, protect, consult with the tribes about, and otherwise respect such important cultural features, artifacts, etc. This topic should be given thorough thought and discussion.

Key Comments:

The inventory, preservation, and management of cultural and historical resources are high priorities for the Tribes and need to be addressed at some level in the CCP. We have cooperated with the Service in this area in the past, and we look forward to continued collaboration through our Tribal Preservation Department. The Tribes request that the Service consult with us regarding these issues, consistent with Executive Order No. 13175 ("Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments"), the Department of the Interior Policy on Consultation with Indian Tribes, and the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. § 300101 et seq.).

We also think that the CCP should address tribal cultural resources and opportunities for tribal collaboration.

We also encourage consideration of the benefits of the Tribes' traditional ecological and cultural knowledge and their special historical, geographic, and cultural relationships with bison and the Range insofar as those deep connections can support the management of natural and cultural resources and the provision of unique public educational and interpretive services at the NBR. We encourage the USF&WS to consider in the development of the conservation plan and environmental review process the various ways that tribal management can enhance and enrich the visitor experience.

The CSKT clearly have unique cultural and historical connections to the land and bison within the NBR. The proposed CCP and EIS must address how to strengthen this relationship between CSKT and NBR.

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We recognize that the bison or buffalo was THE key animal in the life and livelihood of native people of the Plains and Plateau of North America. Even today, the iconic bison holds immense cultural and spiritual significance for these tribes. The CCP/EIS must take these values into account to design an appropriate future management of the National Bison Range.

It is to be expected that the area contains cultural materials and areas important to the tribes and its members. Federal laws mandate that the FWS must recognize its responsibility to identify, protect, consult with the tribes about, and otherwise respect such important cultural features, artifacts, etc. This topic should be given thorough thought and discussion. The Tribes have previously completed a cultural survey and report under contract to the FWS. The CCP process should provide an appropriate opportunity to analyze that report and decide if additional cultural survey work should be done in the future, its nature, the cooperating parties, and related factors that will lead to properly complying with the law, and the desires of the Tribes and members.

ECONOMICS/REFUGE OPERATIONS/STAFFING

Summary: We recommend a clear and concise business plan that illustrates the associated operational costs, revenue streams, and capital investments necessary to sustain long-term management of the NBR. Against the backdrop of budget projections and the "Realignment Strategy Staffing Framework" and its associated protocols, the CCP should address the existing vacant positions, as well as expected, desired and potential positions looking forward. The CCP should address the Service's plans, expectations, budget and cost outlooks for fire control, as well as controlled bums and other fire-related management issues.

Key Comments:

We recommend a clear and concise business plan that illustrates the associated operational costs, revenue streams, and capital investments necessary to sustain long-term management of the NBR.
Please fund the employment positions for the NBR as it merits for such a successful and shining example of the FWS. If the NBR is at all failing it is because of it's management and poor funding on a national level, not from the efforts and devotion of the current NBR employees or management.
It would be helpful for the CCP to address facilities maintenance expectations, needs, budgets and costs for such facilities as the visitor center, residences, barns and other buildings, roundup facilities, picnic area toilets and structures, fences (exterior and interior), and trails.
Given the Service's Region 6 "Realignment Strategy Staffing Framework", and in light of that document's reference to a prioritization protocol for filling vacancies, the CCP should address the Service's expectations or outlook for enforcement responsibilities and jurisdictional impacts, as well as any cross-deputization expectations, needs or opportunities.

Again, against the backdrop of budget projections and the above-referenced "Realignment Strategy Staffing Framework" and its associated protocols, the CCP should address the existing vacant positions, as well as expected, desired and potential positions looking forward. Staffing, and associated volunteer needs, at the National Bison Range, has been the subject of several articles in local/regional newspapers over recent months, so there is likely considerable public interest in understanding the Service's long-term outlook for Bison Range staffing.

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FWS, CSKT and the Bureau of Indian Affairs have historically entered into Annual Fire Management Operating Plan agreements addressing fire control at the National Bison Range. The CCP should address the Service's plans, expectations, budget and cost outlooks for fire control, as well as controlled bums and other fire-related management issues.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE CCP/EIS

Include a substantive section on the history of the CSKT, the NBR, the bison herd and the cultural practices, and traditional values.

The Service must take extra precautions to remain transparent and open to all stakeholders and the public at large.

MISCELLANEOUS OTHER COMMENTS RECEIVED

Transferring the lands, bison and resources of the NBR back into a trust for the CSKT, could reduce the federal bureaucracy and relieve the federal burden and free up funding for other purposes. The economic impacts of the various alternatives, including the potential savings due to transfer of the NBR to the CSKT should be evaluated.

The Service should analyze all of the impacts of transferring the Range to non-federal management

The January NOI is not in compliance with Service planning policy and/or NEPA.

Several comments about the precedent setting nature (both for and against) of the proposed transfer to the Tribes.

Since the NBR staff has been depleted in recent years, it is doubtful that current staff with actual knowledge of conditions at the NBR who should produce a CCP can complete this task without additional staffing. Per Refuge Planning policy, the planning team should include the Refuge manager and key staff members, as well as experts from regional and field offices. 602 FW 3, Sec. 3.4.C(l)(a). This team should engage in pre-planning, gathering of information and data, scoping, consideration of public input, analyzing alternative management options for the NBR as a unit of the NWRS, and all of the other components of the Service's comprehensive planning policy.

Many citizens of western Montana have been harassed, intimidated and even threatened regarding their opinions related to the future of the NBR and the NBRC. FWS has facilitated this in the past by releasing commentor's personal information. FWS should not provide personal information regarding any citizen willing to provide their suggestions and/or opinions in this matter.

Multiple comments about the history of payment to the Tribes for the land and/or the bison herd.

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Summary of Comments Related to the Second Notice of Intent (May 18, 2017)

	Qualities and Opportunities
Wildlife	Refuge provides a 'snap shot' of Montana's wildlife
	Refuge manages plains bison
	Opportunity to revisit wildlife management strategies
	The CCP provides a great opportunity to direct development step-down plans for wildlife management
	CCP can assist FWS in better addressing sharp-tailed grouse reintroduction to NBR
	Develop a new bison management plan based on the Service's nationwide bison meta-population goals
	Time to critically look at and update the fenced animal management plan
	Opportunity to look again at the refuge's coyote control goals and plan (to help antelope recruitment)
	Time to address the need for existing management plans: antelopes, mountain goats, non-trust resources
	I like that you hold and manage bison within the Flathead Indian Reservation
	Since NBR bison herd is founding herd, its conservation and genetics should be paramount in the CCP
	NBR is considered by DOI as an essential part of its commitment to final recovery of the plains bison
	NBR provides habitat for 3 MT Species of Concern, and within range of 3 bat & 22 bird Species of Concern
	CCP is opportunity for FWS to document & address both resident and transient species that use the refuge

	Qualities and Opportunities
Habitat	The refuge is the most invasive plant-free land in Lake County
	Intact maintained ecosystems
	Coordination with surrounding lands for management
	Develop new habitat management plan taking into account the Service nationwide bison population goals
	Maybe a small users fee to drive through NBR would help pay for weed control in the refuge
	NBR has one of the largest remaining remnants of intermountain prairie in the nation – preserve it!
	NBR's unique relict Palouse grassland now integrated with the rare intermountain grassland type places the NBR in a position of being the sole refuge with the responsibility for protection and maintenance of this scarce and valuable habitat type
	Natural settings with highly aesthetic background (Mission Mtn Range and adjacent valley pastoral setting)
	Examine strategies to increase habitat connectivity with & between the NBR and surrounding lands
	NBR's habitats & location in Mission Valley make it a critical wildlife corridor for Flathead Valley animals

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Visitor Services & Outdoor Recreation

Qualities and Opportunities

Diverse opportunities – Birding, Fishing, Scenic/Photographic

Picnic Area: Public support to maintain unique facilities for family gatherings

Environmental education opportunities

Simplicity of usability for public = opportunity

Maintain priorities and mandate, but also define carrying capacity for public use

Nominate Wildlife drive (Red Sleep Mountain Drive) as a scenic highway – funding opportunity

Review and expand Visitor Services and facilities

The plan is an opportunity to think about what experience we want visitors to NBR to have

There are wildlife viewing opportunities and facilities and that are wonderful

Love visiting NBR and seeing all the wildlife and landscape, especially from the upper part of the drive

Look for opportunities to create a wildlife viewing area along Highway 200 along with interpretive signs

Red Sleep Mountain Drive provides views of NBR along the southern slopes; consider adding short trails

NBR is one of the most visited refuges in the country; reach people to foster support for Refuge System

NBR ranks among or exceeds the visitation experienced by the "Urban Refuges" featured by the FWS

Public use of the NBR includes touring, hiking, fishing, wildlife viewing, photography, & environmental Ed.

FWS should ensure enhanced consideration of compatible wildlife-dependent recreational uses in the CCP

Examine and plan for all public use/access considerations (e.g., fee structures, possible tours, picnic area)

Examine current and future outlook for the visitor center, including need and potential for replacement

Consider future interpretive displays, materials and sale items, in native languages and in English

Examine future information availability and standards/criteria for inclusion of information/materials

Cultural Resources

Qualities and Opportunities

Historical value – what it represents - Cultural heritage

Foreign visitors' fascination with U.S. Western history and wilderness drives them to visit NBR

Provide information about the Complex at NBR Visitor Center so that visitors travel to the other units too

Place to learn about natural, cultural and spiritual significance of bison to American Indians & our country

Identify, protect, consult with tribes about, and otherwise respect important cultural features & artifacts

Tribes have previously completed a cultural survey and report under contract to the FWS

American bison has a unique and special place on the landscape: ecological, spiritual and cultural

There are significant cultural sites located on the NBR which were formerly owned in trust for CSKT

CSKT believe that FWS should include in its CCP/EIS some history of the NBR and CSKT involvement

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Partnerships & Communications

Qualities and Opportunities
Knowledge-sharing with neighbors
Community-based approach to invasive species, and other management needs
Messaging to draw visitors: What are the different messages to reach varying visitors?
Need to make sure there is good coordination of multi-agency weed management
Coordination among partners/cooperators nowadays is more reactive, rather than proactive
FWS, State and Tribes should work together, not separately, to manage wildlife on a landscape level
FWS should lead cultivating a relationship with other agencies and create a co-management committee
FWS, CSKT and MTFWP should start working as neighbors rather than unfriendly acquaintances or enemies
Healing bad feelings and mistrust will take time but it is worth the effort for all the Flathead Valley people
Maintain current relationships as well as explore new ones to the betterment of the resources
CSKT could complement the work of other partners working on none refuge lands where FWS is limited
CCP should address potential for opportunities for cooperative efforts with the CSKT at the NBR

Research, Science, Inventory & Monitoring

Qualities and Opportunities
Refuge provides great research opportunities for universities and researchers
Opportunity to address how beneficial are research requests and data for the refuge and for the System
Opportunity to address if there a way to standardize research requests and the decision making process?
Design and conduct a carefully planned, assiduously implemented “integrated pest management program”
CSKT biological staff design & implement various research, I&M programs for resources within Complex

Infrastructure & Operations

Qualities and Opportunities
Highlight priorities/qualities to get funding
Opportunity to address and pursue land swap of the quarter corners area
Great public access
NBRC needs to be again managed as the iconic and respectable refuge it once was
Internal fencing/pastures within NBR constitute a vital component permitting intensive management
Access considerations, including potential for an additional, or alternate, entrance such as at Ravalli Hill
Several newspaper articles on NBR staffing needs indicates likely considerable public interest in NBR future

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Various Other Topics	Qualities and Opportunities
	Open space – lack of development
	Proximity to corridor to Glacier NP
	Identify management priorities and stakeholders – how NBR can fill a gap
	For the agency to integrate objectives from Native American policy into FWS activities
	Need to prioritize issues and make sure CCP focuses on preemptive efforts
	Opportunity for a land swap with the tribe for certain acreage
	Recognize and provide opportunities for CSKT to engage meaningfully in all aspects of NBRC management
	FWS urged to work as closely as possible with CSKT in developing the CCPs for the NBR Complex
	Seek opportunities for CSKT to assume management authority to implement selected management actions
	CSKT could shine in assisting FWS as stakeholder in the area of landscape conservation (i.e., bison)
	CCP provides opportunity to present the public relevant facts on CSKT's with respect to NBR initial herd

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	Issues
Wildlife	Wildlife and domestic animals (cattle) co-mingling which spreads diseases
	Carrying capacity
	Bighorn sheep and diseases: comingling
	Perception that staff doesn't manage bighorn sheep adequately – 80% of bighorn sheep lost to pneumonia
	Fenced wildlife management is challenging; fences not as impermeable as previously thought: what to do?
	Are we managing wildlife for public display: In what direction are the habitats and carrying capacity going?
	Will there be too many visitors to the refuge in the future? Will this lead wildlife to habituate to vehicles?
	Wildlife movements within and without the refuge
	Predator management and refuge being perceived as source of coyotes moving to private lands
	FWS allows excess bison to be transported to be slaughtered; that is merciless and cruel; don't do that
	Each large mammal population on the NBR should be addressed in reasonable detail in the CCP
	The CCP should provide a documented historical outline for management of each species on the NBR
	Concern about wildlife and ecological integrity of wildlife habitat and other NBR land management issues
	A healthy rangeland should be available to support elk, deer, big horn sheep and other roaming species
	CCP needs to address the potential of NBR as grizzly bear habitat, including transient habitat & connectivity
	NBR needs to coordinate with neighbors to manage bear attractants (e.g., fruit trees, beehives, garbage)
	Hope that CCP aspires to carnivore & predator management based on a functioning ecological framework
	Encourage healthy ecosystem (rangeland) to support healthy herds at sustainable population levels
	Concerns over the spread of Chronic Wasting Disease in and around the NBR Complex
	Predators & carnivores as an important element in controlling herd size & the risk of disease and its spread
	CCP should consider opportunities for bison to access areas that may be available adjacent to the NBR
	Identify & describe effects of alternatives on wildlife, particularly regarding obligations under wildlife laws
	CCP should analyze how alternatives fulfill FWS's obligation under Endangered Species Act Section 7(a)(1)
	CCP should consider application of MBTA and BGEPA on NBR to avoid unlawful take of covered bird species
	Consider wildlife-friendly fencing to effectively contain bison while facilitating other species' movements
	Analyze internal fencing's impacts to wildlife and habitat & consider removal to allow natural movements
	The CCP needs to acknowledge CSKT's role in fisheries management at the NBR

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Habitat	Issues
	Enormous issues and problems with invasive plant species variety, distribution, acreage, and dissemination
	Invasive species – existing new ones moving in (milfoil & rush skeleton): highly visible issue
	Weed mitigation on tour road: Use wash station or mass transit to address this problem?
	Finding balance between natural resources and visitors to NBR – 2 million persons drive Hwy 93 annually
	Some areas require forest restoration while other are seeing timber encroachment on prairie habitats
	Intermountain grassland has declined 95% from historic land base.
	Less than 2% of Palouse habitat nationwide. This is a local priority. But, is it a national priority?
	The Jocko River is in need of some stream restoration
	Habitat management plans don't yield immediate results – very complex issue biologically and socially
	Many people don't like to use herbicides to treat invasives, but the drawbacks of not using them is obvious
	NBR should be managed to increase underrepresented habitat types typical of historic area vegetation
	All types of habitat management should be addressed in CCP (e.g., range condition, water management)

Visitor Services & Outdoor Recreation	Issues
	Increased visitation projections and their effect on visitor experience, wildlife, and infrastructure
	No existing compatibility determinations for commercial filming and photography but increasing requests
	Special Use Permits: Commercial tour groups (existing staffing is insufficient to properly manage it)
	Hunting? Why is it seen as being very complicated? Needs to be addressed in the CCP. Tribal youth hunt?
	Expanding the trail system and facilities
	There is a need for a day use area
	Coordination with CSKT on revamping the visitor center in Moiese is the top issue for any new NBR plan
	Add tribal place names and words to informative kiosks around the NBR drive
	Missed opportunities: Tribes' scenic turnout at the top of Ravalli Hill; work with CSKT on informative signs
	Need better understanding of issues related to commercial filming and use of drones
	Lack of staff curtails previous very successful and highly praised outreach programs among Valley schools
	In addition to typical issues, visitor services should include maintaining access for the public
	Opportunities for EE should range from cultural to factors that comprise a healthy ecosystem
	CCP must provide CDs for all individual uses to maintain consistency with wildlife conservation goals
	CCP should describe how each alternative supports the 6 priority wildlife-dependent uses on NBR
	CSKT believe NBR Restoration Act would be effective way to increase public education & visitor experience

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Cultural Resources	Issues
	Why are tribal history, culture, land use, place and animal names being administered from NBR in Moiese?
	Explore & display CSKT and potentially Blackfeet history throughout the Complex (on & off the reservation)
	NBR must be preserved at all costs; it is a vital part of Americana and is crucial to wildlife preservation
	CCP should provide appropriate opportunity to decide if additional cultural survey work should be done
	CCP should detail CSKT's instrumental role in saving the country's last bison at Flathead Indian Reservation
	CCP should detail CSKT's use of current NBR land for hunting, fishing, gathering, cultural & other purposes
	CSKT believes the NBR Restoration Act would be an effective way to address CSKT history with NBR & bison

Partnerships & Communications	Issues
	Take a 'landscape' approach to invasive species management, etc. – Neighborhood Management Plan
	Need to ensure appropriate coordination of multi-agency wildlife surveys
	The refuge needs to find effective ways to improve community outreach and involvement
	Many people tired of commenting and never receiving any feedback (essential to produce quality product)
	FWS failed miserably in communicating the planning process to the public: nothing in local paper, TV, radio
	If FWS truly wants public comments, FWS must convince the public that their efforts will be listened to
	The CCP must be concise, showing historical and proposed future management of the flora and fauna
	FWS must consider how best to establish effective long-term coordination and cooperation with the CSKT

Research, Science, Inventory & Monitoring	Issues
	Air quality & Climate
	Ensure plan monitoring and mitigation = adaptive management
	Maintain and improve what we have and is valuable: tackle and monitor invasive species
	Included the formal & informal research & wildlife mgmt.. studies completed & studies currently underway
	Inclusions of diverse habitats should be inventoried, mapped and maintained at NBR
	Address role of fire and other disturbances in maintaining healthy ecological conditions on the landscape
	CCP should prioritize identification of any new invasive species & have a plan for quickly eradication
	CCP should describe present or potential invasive species (i.e., avian, amphibian, aquatic species, & weeds)
	Address and consider impacts of climate change on rangeland and other ecosystems and wildlife habitat
	Identify monitoring elements to evaluate rangeland conditions and carrying capacity
	Identify monitoring elements to evaluate the health of bison, elk, deer, and bighorn sheep herds
	The CCP should address and encourage development of a proactive plan to address CWD
	Identify opportunities for research including ecological conditions, diversity of plants and animals, etc.
	Include a plan for research and partnering with institutions and agencies both on and off the reservation
	Explain how FWS will monitor status & trends in fish, wildlife, and plants on NBR per Improvement Act
	CCP should include IPMP to prevent & control invasive species, & restore areas affected by weed incursion

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Infrastructure & Operations	Issues
	Define/improve Refuge staff to manage resources and public-use opportunities
	Current staffing levels and positions at NBR are inadequate to meet the purposes and needs
	Ensure visitor safety – difficult with low staffing levels
	Refuge boundary fence built to keep bison in: comingling due to inadequate staffing to maintain fences
	Many refuge quarters are very old: what to do: maintain, replace, and phase out? Some are housing staff.
	Existing facilities are insufficient for current needs: Headquarters office, visitor services building, etc.
	There are poaching issues in the refuge
	Some members of the public would like bring more visitors to the refuge – Move Visitor Center to Hwy 93?
	Relocate NBR entrance along US Highway 93; Moiese is no longer relevant since it is no longer a train stop
	Recruit tribal members to work in technical and support positions at NBR. Make it a priority.
	There is a need to develop a NBR Friends Group
	The Complex staffing chart needs to be filled right away to allow for immediate CCP implementation
	NBR Complex staffing/budget needs should be treated with equal weight as other Region 6 Field Stations
	NBR office and visitor center are very old and need major renovation/replacement (e.g., ADA compliance)
	NBR staff should be selected for their skill, education and experience and not solely due to CSKT affiliation
	Without a minimum of 10 professional staff necessary work cannot be accomplished at the NBR Complex
	The citizens of this nation should always have a say on how NBR and other public lands are managed
	None other CCP was created with the notion of contracting portions of refuge mgmt. to a non-FWS entity
	Delegating refuge programs to a non-federal entity by stripping federal staff of resources breaches policy
	Laws for retention of every refuge in the System were enacted in 1976 opposing refuge co-management
	Amendments to the NWRSAA removed language allowing “other entities” to manage refuge programs
	FWS needs to begin seeking qualified refuge staff according to the previously approved (2015) staffing plan
	FWS should finalize new AFA policy guiding AFA with Tribes on NWRs before negotiating a new CSKT AFA
	CSKT believes the NBR Restoration Act would be an effective way to: manage wildlife and other resources

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	Issues
Various Other Topics	Expansion of wildlife opportunities – acquisition of adjacent lands through cooperation
	FWS should take into consideration all previous comments (over 15+ years) as part of the CCP process
	Local folks feel ignored & don't want to comment more after 15+ years of FWS attempts to give NBR to CSKT
	Lack of sufficient staff and institutional knowledge of previous planning efforts for this planning effort
	Is the planning process to develop the CCP an opportunity for groups and individuals to sue the Service?
	All units of Complex should be considered and addressed in a single CCP; separating them is unwarranted
	Separating units in two CCPs adds unnecessary costs, complexity and inconvenience the public and staff
	Considerably more tax payers dollars will be saved if a single CCP is prepared for the entire Complex
	The planning area is managed as a complex and should be planned as a complex – prepare a single CCP
	No major issues have been identified at this time warranting full blown EIS versus an EA for the NBR
	The Service should allow the process of preparing an EA determine the need for an EIS
	CCP effort must be carried out to fulfil requirements of NWR System Improvement Act and NEPA
	Policy articulated in CCP manual recognizes the refuge manager as the leader of the CCP planning team
	Additional funding and staffing to the Complex should be added immediately to allow CCP development
	Per refuge planning policy the planning team should include, at the very least, the refuge manager, deputy refuge manager, wildlife biologist, visitor services specialists and administrative officer
	It is questionable that Region 6 RO Leadership can be objective and/or capable of an unbiased evaluation
	Under no circumstances should the CSKT be allowed involvement with the CCP as a cooperating agency
	The CSKT should have the same status as other stakeholders, NGO's or the public making views known
	The Service must retain sole and full decision making authority throughout entire CCP process
	Facilitate STEP programs with Salish Kootenai College or University of Montana students in all positions
	Did FWS extend the comment period as another push by CSKT to control the process as well as the NBR?
	FWS needs to stop catering to CSKT because of their continued conflict of interest to take control of NBR
	Any "behind the scenes maneuvering" in the planning process must stop if a quality CCP is to be produced
	Urgent to contact media outlets to set the record straight so general public isn't hesitant to get involved
	The general public is hesitant to get involved as long as the CSKT are controlling the planning effort
	To state that in order to comply with NEPA an EIS and an EA will be produced is ludicrous and wasteful
	FWS must comply with Admin. Procedures Act, analyze all comments received, release the information
	Most local people want FWS to retain complete management control of NBR as the previous 80+
	Support for restoring the lands of the NBR to federal trust ownership for the CSKT based on Treaty
	NBR entirely within borders of Flathead Reservation - reserved by the CSKT in the 1855 Treaty of Hellgate
	The CCP should be all about how to continue the management of NBR, not about who should do it
	CCP should not be approached with blinders, but open to the best partners for the FWS to work with
	NBR belongs to all citizens; shouldn't single out CSKT as "cooperating agency", but should include others

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Various Other Topics	Issues
	Providing adequate funding to continue NBR mission during CCP development and in the implementation
	Use files/data from 1998 NBR CCP effort inclosing comments from staff, partners and neighbors
	Don't discard insightful thoughts provided with much effort and time by many motivated citizens
	CSKT should be the steward of NBR with federal government providing adequate funding
	Complex staff funding levels/restrictions should be based on budgetary, not political concerns
	NBR Complex project leader should organize public meetings with only support of regional office
	No annual funding agreement with the CSKT should be a part of the CCP process
	No special interest group should ever be given any portion of any public/federal land system
	Many objections to CSKT involvement in NBR jobs as such forced employment violates fed. law
	There is no need for CSKT involvement or management of federal taxpayer funds at the NBR
	FWS is in violation of the 1997 NWR System Improvement Act due to a lack of a CCP for NBR
	NBR federal workers, including CSKT members, have been left in limbo and turmoil due to AFAs
	NBR staff should run the CCP process instead of FWS regional staff who are unfamiliar NBR
	Secretary of Interior indicated he wanted refuge managers to have direct control over refuges
	Why was the person hired to write and manage the Complex CCP was excluded from the process
	Regional office personnel cost taxpayers thousands of dollars to fly from Denver for meetings
	Suggesting a preferred alternative before CCP preplanning and/or planning violates Service policy
	Alternatives stating FWS negotiating an AFA would be in direct conflict with CCP purposes
	For this CCP FWS also needs to review comments submitted on the EA for the last proposed AFA
	Recommend that CCP alternatives be left to the public to identify during the planning process
	CCP process requires mandatory public involvement in compliance with mandates and policy
	No personal information addresses should be disclosed unless it is in compliance with the FOIA
	Why isn't the very skillful and knowledgeable planner located at NBR facilitating this CCP effort?
	It's long overdue for the regional leadership to stop the vendetta toward the NBR and its staff
	Strongly opposed to the transfer of the NBR to the CSKT or any other public lands to any tribe
	If the NBR is being managed correctly and competently, why is FWS considering transfer to CSKT?
	Absence of essential NBR staff and basic funding cannot support the demands of initiating a CCP
	CCP should include purposes added in a 1921 Executive Order and in a 1958 Statute (exhibition pasture)
	FWS should withdraw the unwarranted EIS feature from the NBR CCP and prepare an EA instead
	Having CSKT sitting on the "Coordinating Team" would be an unacceptable conflict of interest
	Support for alternative that returns to CSKT control of their traditional lands and cultural resources
	CCP needs to provide explanation of what made FWS change the proposal to transfer NBR to CSKT
	Explain why transferring NBR to CSKT would not equate privatizing public lands or transferring to states
	The CSKT have a special relationship to the NBR that reflects their unique partner situation

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	Issues
Various Other Topics	CCP should evaluate economic impacts of various alternatives including savings due to NBR transfer (CSKT)
	FWS must meaningfully engage with the CSKT in all phases of development of the EIS and CCP
	FWS should honor its intent to invite the CSKT to participate in the CCP process as a cooperating agency
	CCP is legally required to be a plan for refuge mgmt. of a unit of NWRS and not be a vehicle for abolition
	Concerned about how CCP process is being carried out & whether it can result in a policy-based robust CCP
	Engaging in 2 separate CCP/NEPA processes at once greatly increases workload and burden on Refuge staff
	An EIS is a far more demanding and resource-intensive process than the usual process of preparing an EA
	Running CCP/NEPA process from the RO cannot substitute for leadership and contributions at refuge level
	Why was the NBR refuge manager sidelined in the CCP scoping meetings that have already taken place?
	FWS is not following its own CCP manual, casting doubt on whether there will be a legitimate CCP process
	Issuance of NOI should not have occurred without prior planning steps (e.g, assembling the planning team)
	No indication that required preplanning has occurred to date, casting doubt on seriousness of CCP process
	FWS has also already held two public scoping meetings that served little or no legitimate purpose
	Scoping meetings were also poorly publicized and poorly attended; as if only to check off a required box
	Plans for NBR management as a part of NWRS should be completed before considering any other AFA
	Attempting to meld CCP process with an AFA process could significantly delay already long-overdue CCP
	CCP process should be restarted according with the CCP manual, with adequate staffing and resources
	Public and stakeholder involvement & input is a basic NEPA principle and should be embedded in CCP
	Important that FWS comply with CCP policy dictating that the NBR project leader be the leader of the CCP
	A quality staff of several different disciplines should be engaged to carry out the CCP planning process
	NBR program is a field based program and decisions are always best when made at the field level
	FWS should immediately replace refuge staff removed over recent years so planning process is credible
	A proper pre-planning process requires 100s of hours of work to find and assemble all necessary data
	Without a properly developed & run preplanning process it is impossible to develop an implementable CCP
	Essential for FWS to identify & summarize options & issues that properly fall within sideboards & scope
	FWS must take extra precautions to remain transparent and open to all stakeholders & the public at large
	FWS must retain sole and full decision-making authority throughout the CCP process as required by law
	NBR project leader should not just a bystander expected to implement a garbage in / garbage out plan
	The FWS Region 6 Directorate should not be pre-selecting an alternative that will require an EIS for NBR
	CSKT should comply with the NWRSAA delineations on co-management of Ninepipe NWR and Pablo NWR
	FWS should not initiate negotiations on AFA, coop agreement or land transfer until the CCP is completed
	Each CCP alternative must examine how management achieves refuge goals & upholds Congress mandates
	Misleading to imply that most comments to Jan. 2017 opposed to the preferred alternative stated by FWS

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Summary of Comments Related to the Third Notice of Intent (May 18, 2017)

	Qualities and Opportunities
Wildlife	The plan will afford the opportunity to address the benefits of the existing "islands" in Ninepipe NWR
	Opportunity to address the need for removal of predator friendly habitat features on WPAs
	Flathead WPA & adjacent north shore lands support a high number and diversity of birds (229+ species)
	Several species of special concern are found in the Ashley Creek drainage (shared by various WPAs)
	Considering multiple habitat objectives may provide more migratory bird or other wildlife benefits
	Consider future passage for native amphibians and reptiles where they occur: roads tend to be a barrier
	Consider optimum size and configuration of each Complex parcel needed to meet wildlife needs/objectives
	Maintaining large-sized snags and downed wood throughout Complex lands
	Maintain healthy grassland and rangeland habitats for healthy grassland species populations
	CCP should address specific bird populations & management coop efforts, including Trumpeter swans
	Bird habitat conservation motivated designating Pablo & Ninepipe NWRs, this should be prominent in CCP
	CSKT expects big game and all other wildlife species and predator management to be addressed in the CCP

	Qualities and Opportunities
Habitat	Time to address the need for removal of stock ponds in Lost Trail NWR
	Opportunity to address in detail the grazing and farming management on waterfowl production areas
	Opportunity to address in detail all restoration efforts needed in waterfowl production areas
	WPAs have unique qualities worth preserving and maintaining for current and future generations
	In 2009 Montana Audubon designated Flathead WPA & adjacent north shore lands as Important Bird Area
	U of MT researchers describe Flathead Lake as one of the cleanest lakes in populated areas in the world
	Flathead Lake WPA wetlands and vegetated riparian buffers help protect water quality in Flathead Lake
	Complex lands are becoming increasingly vital to sustaining migratory and resident birds and wildlife
	Complex lands sustain T&E plants and animals and healthy populations of game and nongame species
	The quality of the Complex habitats are important for wildlife under development and agriculture pressure
	Complex units are an integral and irreplaceable part of a larger mosaic of protected lands in western MT
	Value of Complex lands will become increasingly important as development and climate pressures increase
	Need greater habitat protection and improvement over time as Complex lands are critically important
	Maintain and enhance Complex habitats to ensure wildlife movement and ecological processes function

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Visitor Services & Outdoor Recreation	Qualities and Opportunities
	The CCP affords the opportunity to address the need and maintenance of trails and associated structures
	Flathead Lake WPA "beach" attracts hundreds of visitors. Is this an environmental education opportunity?
	Lost Trail NWR is a great place to see native flora and fauna.
	Great opportunities to attended excellent educational programs and field trips at Lost Trail NWR
	Find creative management strategies allowing public to enjoy as well as conserve Complex values
	Don't underestimate value of Flathead Lake WPA in providing/maintaining iconic scenic beauty
	Smith Lake WPA is a magnet for birds as well as bird watchers, fishermen, and other visitors
	The units of Complex provide innumerable opportunities for field trips and outdoor recreation
	Bring cross-section of the community out to Complex units to learn/appreciate/understand
	Celebrate 10-year anniversaries with field trips and other outdoor recreational events
	Encourage school programs emphasizing importance of local wildlife, hunting, and open space
	Send out newsletters, use social media to share what it is you have
	Complex lands have highly desired public recreational opportunities near population centers
	Create strategically located self-guided trails, boardwalks, viewing towers, field trips, classes, etc.
	Explore new wildlife watching and hunting opportunities that also allows for various other uses
	CCP provides an opportunity to examine and plan for public uses and access considerations
	Re: access by CSKT citizens, CSKT believe the existing MOA between FWS and CSKT works well
	CCP should address all visitor services issues for Ninepipe & Pablo NWRs in NBR visitor center

Cultural Resources	Qualities and Opportunities
	Blasdel WPA: historic Blasdel Barn is very photogenic and highly cherished by local community
	Widespread interest on Blasdel Barn for commercial filming and photography. Can this be an opportunity?
	Breathtaking views offered to all by Flathead Lake WPA is important to the cultural identity of the area
	The Blackfeet (Pikuni) people may have some history near Lost Trail NWR – find ways to display this
	Explore & display CSKT and potentially Blackfeet history throughout the Complex (on & off the reservation)
	Ninepipe & Pablo NWRs are each on lands that are beneficially-owned by CSKT, and held in trust by the US
	Revisit FWS interaction with Tribal citizens, Reservation community re: indigenous culture, language, & land uses
	FWS becomes a leader in how federal agencies approach partnerships with tribal governments in Indian country
	Inventory, preservation, and management of cultural and historical resources in CCP are CSKT high priority
	CSKT request that FWS consult with CSKT regarding issues consistent with Executive Order No. 13175
	Address FWS to recruit federal staff with knowledge of local tribal culture, or train existing staff accordingly
	Opportunity to revisit FWS' approaching TEK regarding Ninepipe, Pablo, Lost Trail NWR & NW MT WMD

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Partnerships & Communications	Qualities and Opportunities
	Partner with local, state, and tribal agencies, conservation organizations, and others to identify needs
	Work with partners to help identify strategies and solutions that increase government resources efficiency
	Creatively use local skills and resources to improve management within context of surrounding landscapes
	Management solutions require engaging/partnering with adjacent agricultural producers and neighbors
	Partner with neighbors to address wildlife viewing, access, invasive species, and law enforcement issues
	Partner with River to Lake group to protect ecologically significant areas near and provide buffers to WPAs
	Work with MTFWP to complement management and goals of the North Shore WMA and Flathead L. WPA
	Partner with River to Lake in protecting Blasdel WPA and properties surrounding it as wildlife corridor
	Partner with River to Lake to restore riparian habitat and improve water quality, fish and wildlife habitat
	Maintain and increase habitat conservation partnerships with River to Lake throughout the Flathead Valley
	Consider the place that individual and collective CCPs have in the context of other conservation programs
	Consider the specific values/contributions that Complex units add to local/regional/international efforts
	Work cooperatively with neighbors, land trusts, and agencies to preserve/enhance farmlands and soils
	Share, coordinate, and develop complementary plans to cut costs and efficiently address weed control
	Work cooperatively with adjoining landowners to extend the FWS area of influence over a larger landscape
	Seek partners and creative fund-raising to incorporate into the Complex or protect additional parcels
	Work with neighbors to establish/re-establish a more historical and sensible fire regime
	Partner with volunteers and with local fire agencies to help reduce adverse impacts of fires
	Design an outreach program to increase local support for the lands, volunteer base, & improvement ideas
	Partners and foundations are often willing to fund these various kinds of projects on public lands
	CCP should acknowledge history & future Tribal cooperation with FWS in Ninepipe & Pablo NWRs

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Research, Science, Inventory & Monitoring

Qualities and Opportunities
Ongoing research on ospreys regarding water quality issues (mercury) on reservoir fish (specially Ninepipe)
Public benefits of these units are significant and require commensurate level of management and research
Monitoring helps ensure management is responding appropriately to resources stressors and challenges
Conduct research and monitoring collaboratively to collect needed information to protect landscape value
Use American Bird Conservancy surveys that validate and record Flathead Lake and Smith Lake WPA values
Propose in the CCPs to manage with climate change in mind so that there is a degree of flexibility
A cross-section of the community could visit units of the Complex to develop/implement useful projects
Develop educational and research programs unique to each area designed for next generation employees
Create/publicize rules that restrict wildlife collection for recreational or scientific study
Closely monitor and when indicated, decrease cattle-grazing to benefit wildlife habitats
CSKT recommend CCP address surveying & monitoring of nongame birds, as well as amphibians & reptiles
CCP should address contingencies for aquatic invasive species whose profile was recently elevated in MT
Address any projected wildlife, habitat, animal health, or genetics activities or needs in the CCP
Address projected, likely, or potential impacts of climate change on habitat, species, water, forage and fire

Infrastructure & Operations

Qualities and Opportunities
Time to address DNRC state leases (school trust lands) and land exchanges with Lost Trail NWR
Opportunity to figure out and clarify what water rights the Service has in units of the Complex
Opportunity to develop a brand new prescribed fire plan for the waterfowl production areas
Revisit staffing priorities and structures to ensure that Lost Trail NWR and the WPAs achieve their missions
Staff positions in all units of the Complex should be increased to ensure widespread compatible public uses
Current staff levels are far from sufficient to meet the needs and pressures placed on the Complex units
Each CCP needs to identify needs, locations, and opportunities to expand its boundaries/protect lands
Increase staffing to closer to historical levels so that the CCPs can be properly implemented
Ensure that all infrastructure, wildlife/plant/natural barriers, and traffic speeds are wildlife friendly
Ensure all Complex structures are screened or capped to prevent entrapment of cavity seeking wildlife
CCP process can address in depth the history before, during & after establishing Ninepipe & Pablo NWRs
CSKT has valid existing rights Tribal uses recognized by Congress within Ninepipe NWR and Pablo NWR
Reservoir conditions & water management issues are all components that should be addressed in the CCP
Address facilities maintenance expectations, needs, budget & costs for facilities, including fences and trails
Address FWS expectations or outlook for LE responsibilities & jurisdictional impacts and cross-deputization
Address the existing vacant positions, as well as expected, desired and potential positions looking forward
Address FWS plans, expectations, budget & cost outlooks for fire control and management, prescribed fire

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Various Other Topics	Qualities and Opportunities
	Develop comprehensive plans for each unit taking into account regional landscape and conservation needs
	Goals should consider Complex units within larger landscapes, stressors, and area conservation programs
	Assess how Complex units complement and strengthen local, regional, and transboundary conserv. efforts
	Importance and public benefits that Complex provides have increased as Flathead Valley grows/develops
	WPAs in Flathead Valley truly deserve thoughtful consideration to ensure endurance of benefits provided
	Manage in Complex lands in context with local, regional, and international conservation efforts
	CCPs should consider the land context and value to wildlife as well as their value to buffer development
	If applicable, establish a means to ensure each property has sufficient water rights in perpetuity
	Whenever possible, control, minimize, or decrease light pollution throughout the Complex's habitats
	To the extent possible reduce noise pollution or use vegetation or other means throughout Complex lands
	NRCS is always available to assist FWS on WRP Program objectives, or specific easement goals & objectives
	CCP would assist in helping public understanding of FWS' newly-designated Western MT NWR Complex
	FWS leads how federal agencies approach federal trust responsibility towards tribes within NWR mgmt.
	CSKT encourage FWS to examine Canadian Wildlife Service's Impact and Benefit Agreements on NWAs
	CSKT believe CCP presents opportunity for FWS to encourage field-level implementation of FWS' TEK

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	Issues
Wildlife	Mercury levels in refuges fish (especially Ninepipe reservoir) also affecting raptors (osprey)
	Complex staff don't manage the fisheries resources on the reservoirs in Ninepipe and Pablo NWRs
	Lost Trail NWR is home to various Federally and state listed species, which require special management
	Lost Trail NWR: issues with nonnative fish species on streams and nonnative plant species in wet meadows
	Issues with hunting of non-approved species (bears, coyotes, ground squirrels, etc.) in Lost Trail NWR
	There are issues with wolf management in Lost Trail NWR
	Blasdel WPA: is surrounded by urban development, has non-native habitat with little native wildlife value
	Is the increasing and spreading urban encroachment around Flathead Lake WPA affecting the wildlife?
	Consider what the best or multiple values (e.g., breeding, rearing, migratory) that Complex lands have
	A diversity of habitat or management objectives over Complex units should be evaluated with public input
	Invasive species should be dealt with best management practices to avoid impacts to native plants/animals
	FWS exists to offer up animal bodies for murder and killing; I want humane treatment of all animals
	We need much more consideration of what the handling of the bison will be at NBR
	Other wildlife needs to be protected too on our national lands, such as wild horses
	The CCP should address CSKT's management of the fisheries resources in Ninepipe NWR and Pablo NWR

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	Issues
Habitat	Enormous issues and problems with invasive plant species variety, distribution, acreage, and dissemination
	CSKT and the Complex have very different habitat management priorities in Pablo and Ninepipe NWRs
	CSKT and Complex habitat and reservoir management priorities is not conducive to migratory bird mgmt.
	There are significant cattle trespass issues on Pablo NWR and insufficient communications
	Refuges reservoirs help spread invasive species via thousands of miles of irrigation system carrying seeds
	Elk populations are heavily impacting Lost Trail NWR aspen habitats
	Lost Trail NWR staff are in need of a Spalding's catchfly recovery plan to help guide habitat management
	Grazing by free ranging cattle upstream from Lost Trail NWR causing siltation problems on refuge habitats
	There are timber encroachment issues on Lost Trail NWR habitats
	Weyerhaeuser has requested Lost Trail NWR to change easement language to be able to sell its properties
	Flathead WPA is IBA listed; many weed issues and funding has been inadequate to address invasive species
	There are increasing issues with development encroachment around Smith Lake WPA
	This is national public land, not local land for profiteers or federal and state employees to maul
	We need land to preserve and protect wildlife and birds; that should be the aim of this plan
	There should be no burning, no chemical applications, no new roads built, and no logging allowed
	Grazing violations in Ninepipe NWR and Pablo NWR have contributed to invasive weed infestations
	There are impacts to Ninepipe NWR and Pablo NWR habitats from unauthorized farming practices
	Lack of funding and staffing have prevented NBR Complex from complying with its Integrated Pest Mgmt.
	Complex needs to fully comply with State/County weed control laws governing landowner responsibility
	Consider the separate and cumulative impacts that invasive species, climate change and urbanization have
	Cattle profiteers should be taken out from our public lands, and they should buy or lease their own land
	Grazing violations in Ninepipe NWR and Pablo NWR contribute to widespread invasive weed infestations
	Unauthorized farming practices have degraded wildlife habitats within designated refuge boundaries

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Visitor Services & Outdoor Recreation	Issues
	Ninepipe and Pablo NWRs are currently closed, to the general public, to trapping and hunting
	Safety and legal issues need to be addressed due to road hunting adjacent to Lost Trail NWR
	Waterfowl hunting on Lost Trail NWR: redraw hunting boundaries? Insufficient staff and waterfowl studies
	Due to level of visitation, Smith Lake WPA is in need of additional parking and a boat launch
	Smith Lake WPA has off-road vehicle trespass, vandalism, fires, and parking lot parties issues
	Trapping issues on the NW MT Wetland Management Districts waterfowl production areas
	Issues with availability and maintenance of trails and associated structures on waterfowl production areas
	Hundreds of trespass instances every year on Flathead Lake WPA from people wanting to use the beach
	Almost impossible to post boundary signs in parts of Flathead Lake WPA because of lake level variations
	There should be no hunting or trapping to cause misery and torture to wildlife. Protect and preserve them.
	Calling the murder of wildlife and birds "wildlife dependent recreation" is a disgusting and deplorable scam
	Killing and trapping wildlife is brutality and insanity
	Recreation in and near WPAs pose increasing challenges requiring increased education and interpretation
	Fix up dilapidated walking path, outhouse, and weed and bee-infested recreation area at Ninepipe NWR
	Ninepipe and Pablo NWRs are sorely underused for environmental education
	Trails: Need to be inspected, upgraded and replaced as needed for safety, staff needs, and public access
	Joint wildlife viewing trail for Ninepipe NWR (Tribe, State and FWS) needs replacement & weed control

Cultural Resources	Issues
	Lost Trail NWR staff is having issues with the maintenance of historic buildings on the refuge
	Lost Trail NWR staff need to find ways to secure currently unprotected pictographs and address access
	Blasel WPA: historic Blasdel Barn is in a state of disrepair and there are many trespass issues with it
	Blasel WPA: historic Blasdel Barn is a liability issue – what to do with it? Keep it? Divest area? Restore it?
	Blasel WPA: historic Blasdel Barn would cost nearly $1 million to restore it solely for preservation purposes
	Blasel WPA: serious law enforcement issues with trespassing and arson fire danger

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Partnerships & Communications	Issues
	Lack of sufficient communications between CSKT and the Complex on reservoir management and farming
	Insufficient communications between CSKT and the Complex on leases for grazing and farming on refuges
	Complex personnel unable to establish effective communications with different tribal departments
	The Complex needs to find effective ways to improve community outreach and involvement
	It appears that the public has some confusion about the management of Smith Lake WPA
	Recreation in and near WPAs pose increasing challenges requiring increased management, outreach, & LE
	Public outreach is a paramount need for the Complex to ensure success and long-term programs
	Most of the public has no idea who manages the Flathead County WPAs and who to contact
	Lack of info re: the units involved in this CCP proposal precluded detailed ideas, comments or suggestions

Research, Science, Inventory & Monitoring	Issues
	Address changing weather patterns, including extended summer droughts and increased temperatures
	Need to address the value that Complex units provide for wildlife, water/groundwater quality & quantity
	Overall goals and objectives should be based on science and wildlife needs, rather than current budgets
	Control first the invasive species that have the greatest impact on native species and habitats
	Identify extent, distribution, and impacts of invasive species to habitats/wildlife and management strategy
	Each CCP should have a solid integrated noxious weed plan (and include funding), including partnerships
	Ensure proper staffing to allow professional oversight and coordination with scientific studies
	Lack of funding/staffing prevented Complex from complying with its integrated pest management program

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Infrastructure & Operations	Issues
	Complex staffers are unclear on their management authority on Ninepipe and Pablo NWRs
	Inability to enforce wildlife and other conservation-related laws on Ninepipe and Pablo NWRs
	Lost Trail NWR has great need for maintenance staffing and fencing crew
	There are many leased-land cattle trespass cases in Lost Trail NWR due to unmaintained fence
	Lost Trail NWR has great need of a habitat management plan, a fire plan, and fire funding
	Lost Trail NWR staff has great need of a report detailing the refuge's water rights
	Some members of the public have made requests for grazing on Lost Trail NWR lands
	Realignment calls for no staff at Lost Trail NWR; so no full-time officer to address trespass issues
	Issues of water rights on WPAs: some un-adjudicated or no water rights owned at all
	Lack of uniformity of prescribed fire management: varies among WPAs and refuges
	Uncertain status and need for repair and maintenance of fences and water control structures
	Difficulties with the manipulation of water levels on WPAs
	Issues in Batavia WPA: unmaintained dikes, flooding neighbors: highway department mitigation
	Weyerhaeuser logging activities and transportation causing access issues at Smith Lake WPA
	Lost Trail NWR staff has issues with ability to enforce laws on Smith Lake WPA
	Enormous difficulties enforcing closure of parts of Flathead Lake WPA – MT was sued trying it
	Complex staff doesn't have the personnel or means to patrol Flathead Lake WPA appropriately
	There are intrusion issues on Pablo NWR related to the CSKT-operated Race Track on site
	FWS is far too stupid for giving away our national land to cheap leasing to plunderers and profiteers
	Violations of easement conditions and an intrusion into the Pablo NWR by a CSKT operated Race Track
	Ninepipe and Pablo NWRs should only be used by CSKT for purposes compatible with the refuge purposes
	Congress reiterated CSKT rights to Ninepipe & Pablo NWR lands for purposes not inconsistent with easements
	MOU between FWS, CSKT and BIA recognized farming program within NWRs as consistent with NWR purposes
	As part of US legislation, CSKT retains congressionally-recognized reserved rights in Ninepipe and Pablo NWRs

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	Issues
Various Other Topics	Uncertainty of the compliance status of the conservation easements due to insufficient inspections
	Differences in land use regulations among refuge neighbors and partners (Tribes and County governments)
	Why is Swan River NWR not in Complex even though it is in same watershed and mentioned in realignment
	There are various and diverse encroaching issues bearing on Pablo NWR, Ninepipe NWR, and the WPAs
	Complex staffers don't fully understand the issues between the tribal and county water rights: compact
	Safety (poor visibility due to dust) and road condition issues adjacent to Lost Trail NWR from logging trucks
	Might CSKT want to include ancestral lands (e.g., Lost Trail NWR) on future Annual Funding Agreements?
	Want that on national public lands, owned by Americans, you to stop acting so notoriously ugly to wildlife
	If what you are planning is wildlife and bird murder, let the public know what you are really about
	Public lands belong to the American public and they need honesty. Don't use obfuscating language
	Lack of information regarding units involved in the CCP precludes detailed ideas, comments or suggestions.
	Had FWS followed usual preplanning steps more would have had opportunity to respond more fully
	Continuing and troubling compatibility issues at Ninepipe NWR and Pablo NWR involving the CSKT
	Previous AFA negotiations have precluded the Complex from addressing issues identified in late 1990s
	All units of Complex should be considered and addressed in a single CCP; separating them is unwarranted
	Separating units in two CCPs adds unnecessary costs, complexity and inconvenience the public and staff
	Prepare all overdue CCPs within Region 6 before revisiting the Lost Trail NWR CCP, which is not due yet
	Considerably more tax payers dollars will be saved if a single CCP is prepared for the entire Complex
	The planning area is managed as a complex and should be planned as a complex – prepare a single CCP
	WRP easements adjoining Complex lands and their provisions should be points of focus in planning process
	Incorporate WRP mission and management objectives into the CCPs planning process and objectives
	Avoid incorporating management scenarios into CCPs that conflict with WRP Program statutes/easements
	We are sick & tired that FWS seems to hire & put in charge only wildlife murderers, beginning with D. Ash
	Want investigation on FWS hiring practices; Is there a requirement to murder wildlife in employment app?
	Had FWS completed preplanning steps there would have been opportunity to respond fully during scoping
	Lack of opportunity for preplanning prevents certainty of possible compatibility issues on all Complex units
	FWS should include history and legal status of the Ninepipe and Pablo NWRs in the CCPs to educate public
	Public may be unaware of CSKTs' ownership of the lands upon which Ninepipe & Pablo NWRs are located
	CSKT had a role in originally requesting Ninepipe and Pablo be federally-designated as conservation areas
	CSKT granted a perpetual easement to US for use of the Ninepipe & Pablo properties for refuge purposes
	It is in both CSKT's and FWS' best interest in educating people about NWRs historical and legal landscape
	CSKT asks cooperative efforts with CSKT to be addressed in the EA under all the CCP/EA alternatives

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Purposes, Vision and Goals Workshop Report

On November 7, 2017, members of the Planning Team for the National Bison Range Complex (NBR Complex) Comprehensive Conservation Plans (CCP) participated in a workshop to develop a draft vision statement and a set of draft goals.

The participants were:

From the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes:	Dennis Clairmont, Brian Upton and Dale Becker
From Sanders County:	Gale Decker, Wally Congdon, and Pat Jamieson
From the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:	Bernie Petersen, Kevin Shinn, Marlin McDonald, Amy Lisk, Beverly Skinner, Tom Reed, Rob Bundy, Kelly Hogan, Matthew McCollister, Vanessa Fields, and Bernardo Garza

After revisiting and commenting on the establishing purposes for each of the units of the NBR Complex, and reviewing the list of qualities, opportunities and issues raised during the scoping period, the Planning Team set out to develop a draft vision and a set of draft goals for the CCPs.

The workshop participants formed three groups and developed the following draft a vision statements for the NBR Complex:

Draft Visions

Group 1

> Relax, take a deep breath while you take a step back in time to reflect on what was, what is, and what is yet to come. Immerse yourself in diverse landscapes shaped by glacial/geologic forces steeped in rich cultural history. [5 votes]
>
> NBRC provides an opportunity to learn and experience varied habitats, abundant wildlife and the natural beauty of these lands. [3 votes]
>
> Foster partnerships and promote education to repair and preserve intact functioning ecosystems in a rapidly changing environment.

Group 2

> Envision a time when wildlife could flow freely across the landscape. This inter-montane prairie is where wolves are peak hunters, where early conservationists preserved bison, small endangered Spalding's catchfly are valued, expansive meadows of blue camas blanket the valley, and ancient cultures continue to thrive. [3 votes]

The NBRC safeguards these values as well as species of concern forming a continuity through time for future generations to experience and treasure.

The NBRC will work through conservation, preservation, and restoration to maintain an ecological system. [1 vote]

We will partner with others to foster cultural and natural resource conservation. Since many of the units are within the Flathead Indian Reservation and all are within the homelands of the Tribes, unique opportunities to work with partners exist. [5 votes]

Group 3

Memorialize and pay tribute to the persons and peoples who set aside the lands, wildlife, and plants that created the various components that make up the refuge complex. [2 votes]

Conserve the scenery and the natural and cultural resources of the components of the refuge complex. [1 vote]

Facilitate scientific interest and research in the refuge complex, public education, and utilization and enjoyment of the refuge complex. [2 votes]

Ensure wildlife and people enjoy appropriate opportunity to use, utilize, and experience lands, resources, and habitats. [2 votes]

Manage the refuge complex and its individual units as part of the NWR System. Acknowledging the uniqueness of each component and their respective occupants. [9 votes]

To accomplish these goals of the refuge complex, our vision includes the following:

(insert here the goals of the NWR System) [1 vote]

The three draft vision statements were posted for all to see. Each participant was provided with three sticky dots with which they voted on their favorite sections of the draft vision statements. After the vote, the entire Planning Team regathered and, based on the votes (shown in brackets) the following combined vision statement was developed and subsequently edited.

Combined Draft Vision

Relax and take a deep breath while you step back in time to reflect on what was, what is and what is yet to come. Immerse yourself in the inter-montane valleys of northwestern Montana shaped by glacial forces and steeped in rich cultural history.

This is a special landscape important to people age after age, where we pay tribute to the persons and peoples who set aside the lands, conserved the wildlife and plants, and were stewards of various components that make up the complex.

Visitors from all over the world travel to the NBR Complex which seeks to provide an opportunity to learn and experience varied habitats, abundant wildlife and the natural beauty of these lands.

NBRC safeguards these values and preserves connectivity across the landscape, forming continuity through time for future generations to treasure.

Each unit is unique, and collectively they have, and will continue, to contribute to the NBR Complex and the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Partners foster cultural and natural resources conservation where the cultural history is expressed across the landscape. Unique opportunities to work with partners benefit many of the units within the Flathead Indian Reservation and other units located within traditional homelands of the Salish, Upper Pend d'Oreille, and Kootenai Tribes.

After developing the draft vision statement, the Planning Team began the development of a set of draft goals for the CCPs. The Planning Team brainstormed potential goal topics and then formed the following three groups, based on expertise and interests:

Potential Goal Topics	Persons in the Group
Bison, Wildlife Management, Habitat Management, T&E Species, Ecological Integrity, Invasive Species, Research and Science	Amy, Beverly, Dale, Kevin
Cultural Resources, Partnerships, Public Uses	Pat, Tom, Rob, Gale, Marlin
Collaboration, Monitoring and Mitigation, Administration, Operations	Wally, Brian, Bernie, Dennis

These groups gathered to decide what might be the necessary goal topics for the CCPs and developed the following preliminary draft goals:

<u>Wildlife Management</u>
Protect, maintain, and restore a healthy and diverse wildlife populations with respect to species that are endemic, migratory, and mandated species of concern.

<u>Invasive Species</u>
Inventory, monitor, and evaluate threats to Service lands from invasive species to effectively manage, protect, restore, maintain.

<u>Habitat Management</u>
Conserve, restore and promote biological integrity and functional ecologically diverse habitats.

<u>Research and Science</u>
Encourage the use of high quality research to promote scientifically sound management decisions.

Monitoring and Mitigation

Through the life of the CCP we will monitor and evaluate the consequences of our actions and evaluate the response use adaptive management to reach desired outcomes.

Administration and Operations

Effectively use funding, staff, partnerships, volunteers and equipment to restore and manage refuge complex habitats, conduct programs, and improve and maintain all necessary infrastructure to the benefit of the NBRC and the Refuge System.

NEPA definition: Mitigation includes: a) avoiding impact altogether; b) limiting the degree of the impact; c) repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected environment; d) reducing the impact by preservation opportunities; or e) compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments or opportunities.

Tribal Collaboration

We will collaborate with tribal government in a manner consistent with the Service's Native American policy and with other Federal, State, and local government entities in a manner consistent with applicable Service policies.

Partnerships

A wide range of partners join with NBRC to support wildlife and habitat conservation, research, foster awareness and appreciation of natural and cultural resources and provide education (along with the necessary infrastructure) of the inter-montane ecosystem of western MT.

Public Use

Provide compatible wildlife dependent recreation and education opportunities for persons of all abilities to learn, enjoy, and appreciate the inter-montane ecosystem of western MT, the fish, wildlife and plants.

Cultural Resources

Preserve and value the cultural resources and history of the NBRC to connect staff, visitors and community to the area's past and continuing traditions.

The preliminary draft goals were posted for all to see. The entire Planning Team spent a few minutes reading the goals and writing notes or comments on the goals. Afterwards, the entire Planning Team regathered and, based on the comments the entire Planning Team worked on editing the goals to read as follows:

Draft Goals for the NBR Complex CCPs

Wildlife Management Goal

Protect, maintain, and restore healthy and diverse wildlife populations with respect to species that are endemic, migratory, and mandated species of concern.

Habitat Management Goal

Conserve, restore, and promote biological integrity in functional and sustainable ecologically diverse habitats of the inter-montane ecosystem of western Montana

Invasive Species Goal

Prevent, reduce, and contain the invasion and spread of noxious, invasive, and harmful nonnative species within the Complex while working with partners to address off-Complex infestations within the surrounding landscape.

Research and Science Goal

Encourage high quality research and promote the use of scientifically sound management decisions.

Monitoring and Adaptive Management Goal

Through the life of this plan, we will monitor and evaluate the consequences of our actions and use adaptive management to reach desired outcomes.

Public Use Goal

Provide compatible, wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities, for persons of all abilities, to learn, enjoy, and appreciate the inter-montane landscape of western Montana, the fish and wildlife and plants.

Cultural Resources Goal

Preserve and value the cultural resources and history of the National Bison Range Complex to connect staff, visitors, and community to the area's past and continuing traditions.

Partnerships and Collaboration Goal

Maintain and cultivate partnerships that help achieve the vision and supporting goals and objectives of the National Bison Range Complex to support wildlife and habitat conservation, research, foster awareness and appreciation of natural and cultural resources and provide education along with all necessary infrastructure of the inter-montane ecosystem of western Montana.

Recognizing its importance, we will collaborate with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and other Tribal governments in a manner consistent with the Service's Native American policy and with other Federal, State, and local government entities in a manner consistent with applicable Service policies.

Administration and Operations Goal

Effectively use funding, staff, partnerships, volunteers, and equipment to restore and manage Complex habitats, conduct programs, and improve and maintain all necessary infrastructure to the benefit of the Complex and the Refuge System.

After reviewing the progress made during the workshop and the next steps in the planning process the workshop was adjourned.

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Brian Upton; David Redhorse; Gale Decker; Jennifer Ekberg; Neil Anderson
Cc:	Kelly Hogan; Vanessa Fields; Bernie Petersen; McCollister, Matthew; Kevin Shinn
Subject:	Vision and Goals Workshop Report and Draft Scoping Report
Date:	Friday, November 17, 2017 12:23:15 PM
Attachments:	DRAFT NBRC CCPs Scoping Report.pdf PVG Workshop Report.pdf

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Planning Team,

I'm attaching a couple of documents with this email message.

One of them is a "report" on the purposes, vision, and goals workshop activities and results. This document contains that draft vision statement and the draft goals developed by the participants in the workshop. I want to ask you to review it and give me any comments and/or suggestions you may have on the draft vision and goals (i.e., this is your opportunity to wear your "editing" hat and help the Planning Team in making the draft vision and goals succinct and eloquent).

The other document is the same Draft Scoping Report that was handed out during last week's workshop. I ask that you review it and provide me any edits/changes/additions that you want to propose to this report.

Please provide me with your comments/edits/additions by the end of November 2017.

Thank you.

--

Bernardo Garza
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National Bison Range Complex
Comprehensive Conservation Plans

Scoping Report

Introduction

In 2017, Region 6 of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) published three Notices of Intent (NOI) in the Federal Register (FR) announcing the development of comprehensive conservation plans (CCP) for the units of the National Bison Range Complex (Complex) in Montana.

The first NOI was published in the FR on January 18, 2017, and announced the Service's intent to develop a CCP for the National Bison Range. This NOI informed the public of three management alternatives being considered by the Service: A) Current Management—continuing current management and serving as a baseline for comparing other the other alternatives; B) Preferred Management Option—recommending a Congressional transfer of the NBR to the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) of the Flathead Reservation; and, C) Executing and carrying out a draft negotiated Annual Funding Agreement with the CSKT per the Tribal Self Governance Act.

The second NOI was published in the FR on May 18, 2017. This NOI announced the Service's revision of the original January 2017 FR notice. The NOI provided additional opportunities for public input and stated the Service's intent to continue the development of a CCP for the NBR while announcing a change in policy direction regarding the legislative transfer of the NBR.

The third NOI was published in the FR on May 18, 2017. This NOI announced the Service's intent to gather information to prepare a CCP for Lost Trail, Ninepipe, and Pablo National Wildlife Refuges, and the Northwest Montana Wetland Management Districts in Lake and Sounders Counties, Montana.

To date, the Service has received hundreds of comments in response to the three NOIs and to the information provided during the four public scoping meetings held throughout the planning area. For ease of use, this report is divided in three parts, according to the three NOIs mentioned, and provides a summary of the comments, in table format, organized according to distinct categories.

Because the January 2017 and May 2017 NOIs announced different actions by the Service the nature of the comments received was different as well. Therefore, this report has a slight difference in how it provides the reader the summary of the comments received.

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Summary of Comments Related to the First Notice of Intent (January 18, 2017)

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

Summary: Encourage an ecologically intact ecosystem based on healthy rangeland as a foundation for supporting herds of healthy bison and other species such as elk, deer, big horn sheep and other big game and wide roaming species and would include such issues as: herd size targets/culling plans; general health monitoring and management; genetics; as well as other general management issues. Address predator management (including, among other species, black bear, grizzly bear, gray wolf, coyote, mountain lion, golden eagle, and bald eagle) and their role in controlling herd size and risk of disease and its spread, especially CWD. The CCP and EIS needs to address the potential of the NBR to serve as grizzly bear habitat, including transient habitat and connectivity to other occupied and unoccupied areas.

Key Comments:

Although the NBR is managed largely for the bison herd, the CCP should also consider the health of the rangeland for elk, deer, big horn sheep and other big game and wide roaming species.
The CCP and EIS needs to address the potential of the NBR to serve as grizzly bear habitat, including transient habitat and connectivity to other occupied and unoccupied areas consistent with the NCDE Conservation Strategy. This may include the NBR as well as coordinating with neighboring residents.
Encourage an ecologically intact ecosystem based on healthy rangeland as a foundation for supporting herds of healthy bison and other species at sustainable population levels and envision the presence and tolerance of predators and carnivores as an important element in controlling herd size and the risk of disease and its spread, especially CWD.

The Tribes would also expect that predator management (including, among other species, black bear, grizzly bear, gray wolf, coyote, mountain lion, golden eagle, and bald eagle) would be addressed by the CCP.

BISON MANAGEMENT

Summary: The CCP must consider how the genetic integrity of the bison herd will be maintained for the long term. The current USFWS genetic and health monitoring program should be continued, in part or whole, as part of the management plan for NBR. This should be part of a greater landscape conservation effort. Encourage the CCP to consider opportunities for bison to access areas that may be available adjacent to the NBR.

Key Comments:

Encourage the CCP to consider opportunities for bison to access areas that may be available adjacent to the NBR. We recommend that a quality and genetically reputable herd be maintained by CSKT at NBR. The CCP must consider how the genetic integrity of this herd will be maintained for the long term. The current USFWS genetic and health monitoring program should be continued, in part or whole, as part of the management plan for NBR. How this program is to be cooperatively administered and implemented by CSKT and DOI should be explained in the planning process.

DRAFT

Given the National Bison Range's purpose for establishment of preserving the American bison, it seems appropriate to consider the refuge's role in biological diversity and ecosystem management where purity of genetic strains of bison are preserved for restoration of herds at various locations of the Great Plains. This would be part of a greater landscape conservation effort.

The Tribes expect that bison and big game species management would be prominently addressed in the CCP. This management, including for bighorn sheep, elk and deer, would include such issues as: herd size targets/culling plans; general health monitoring and management; genetics; as well as other general management issues. Each large mammal population on the NBR should be addressed in reasonable detail, providing a documented historical outline for each species on the NBR. This should include population origin, relevant objectives, past methods used to maintain the population within objective targets, methods for dealing with disease outbreaks, and other life-history data of importance. Summaries should be included for the formal and informal research and wildlife management studies that have been completed, and all studies currently underway. These facts should thus form the basis for discussion of alternative management strategies later in the CCP.

The CCP should provide a detailed history of the origins and original purposes for establishing the NBR along with facts on the founding animals and respective bloodlines of those founders. The NBR's founding bison have a complex lineage and documented interactions with other major lineages. Those factors should be thoroughly discussed. Past inadvertent cattle introgression, potential for future genetic drift, strengths and deficiencies of current genetic testing techniques and related topics should be presented. Disease possibilities and protocols for periodic testing along with methodologies for handling sudden outbreaks should be elaborated.

The founding of a bison metapopulation in 2009 along with a basic operating protocol for such management and its primary objectives is a very important topic for the CCP. The central role of NBR bison in that metapopulation model is an essential feature of all Fish and Wildlife Service bison herds. It is, therefore, highly important that a thorough discussion be included in the background information of the CCP.

HABITAT MANAGEMENT

Summary: Range condition, weed management, pine encroachment, forest habitat management, fire management, riparian management, wetland management, and water management issues are all components of habitat management that should be addressed in the CCP. A solid discussion of internal fencing/pastures within NBR should be included. Diverse habitats should be inventoried, mapped and maintained and the NBR should be managed to increase underrepresented habitat types typical of historic vegetation.

Key Comments:

Diverse habitats should be inventoried, mapped and maintained and the NBR should be managed to increase underrepresented habitat types typical of historic vegetation.

Encourage addressing the role of fire and other disturbances in maintaining the native vegetation
Range condition, weed management, pine encroachment, forest habitat management, fire management, riparian management, wetland management, and water management issues are all components of habitat management that should be addressed in the CCP.

The internal fencing/pastures within NBR constitute a vital component permitting that more intensive management. A solid discussion related to these subjects is called for in the CCP.

INVASIVE SPECIES

Summary: Invasive species issues (including both terrestrial and aquatic) should be identified and prioritized and there should be an early detection, rapid response plan as well as a plan to control existing infestations and reduce the occurrence and spread.

Key Comments:

Invasive species issues should be identified and prioritized and there should be an early detection, rapid response plan as well as a plan to control existing infestations and reduce the occurrence and spread.

The Tribes believe that the CCP should address contingencies for aquatic invasive species, whose profile has recently been elevated in Montana.

Additionally, invasive species are a recognized problem on the NBR. For the refuge to maintain and protect the vital native grasslands, particularly key species of fescue and other native grasses along with its other vital components, it must design and conduct a carefully planned, assiduously implemented "integrated pest management program" annually. Such a program is labor intensive and requires involved technicians to have formal training, proper equipment, and important knowledge of the target species and any potential or listed threatened or endangered native species that could be affected.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Summary: A major complicating factor that must be thoroughly addressed in the CCP is the expected features and likely impacts to be expected from the effects of Climate Change on habitat, species (fauna and flora), water, forage and wild fire impacts. The Tribes would ask the Service to take into consideration the Tribes' Climate Change Strategic Plan, which was adopted in September 2013 and is available at www.csktribes.org/CSKTClimatePlan.pdf

Key Comments:

In order to effectively look forward as a planning document, the CCP should address projected, likely, or potential impacts of climate change on habitat, species (fauna and flora), water, forage and wild fire impacts. The Tribes would ask the Service to take into consideration the Tribes' Climate Change Strategic Plan, which was adopted in September 2013 and is available at [www.csktribes.org/CSKTClimatePlan.pdf].

Climate change could affect habitat, species, the amount and quality of water, and the availability of forage. Resulting high intensity wild fire can threaten forest ecosystems and impact soil and water quality. Species migration into the area can increase competition for grasses and forage. Please address and consider impacts of climate change on rangeland and other ecosystems and wildlife habitat.

DRAFT

A major complicating factor that must be thoroughly addressed in the CCP is the expected features and likely impacts to be expected from the effects of Climate Change. It is likely that some subtle, but important changes have already begun to affect the NBR plants and animals. The Coordinating Team should consist of expert wildlife, plant, disease, genetic, and ecosystem specialists from agencies such as the State Fish and Game Department, State agricultural agency, USGS Biological Division, Natural Resources Conservation Service, USFS, County officials, the University of Montana, and others in order to have the expertise necessary for identifying and analyzing available data along with interpreting models of expected climate changes in Western Montana and the Mission Valley in particular.

MONITORING AND RESEARCH

Summary: We encourage the CCP to identify opportunities for research. These could include ecological conditions, diversity of plants and animals on the bison range, role of carnivore in population and disease control, role of wildfire and other disturbance regimes in grassland health and maintenance and diversity of habitat, presence and control of weeds and other invasive species, among other things. The CCP should include a plan for research and partnering with institutions and agencies both on and off the reservation. The Tribes further recommend that the CCP address surveying and monitoring of nongame birds, as well as amphibians and reptiles.

Key Comments:

We expect the CCP to identify monitoring elements to evaluate rangeland conditions and carrying capacity, as well as the health of the bison herd and other species including elk, deer, and bighorn sheep. Again, we are concerned about CWD and encourage a proactive plan to address this disease.

We encourage the CCP to identify opportunities for research. These could include ecological conditions, diversity of plants and animals on the bison range, role of carnivore in population and disease control, role of wildfire and other disturbance regimes in grassland health and maintenance and diversity of habitat, presence and control of weeds and other invasive species, among other things. The CCP should include a plan for research and partnering with institutions and agencies both on and off the reservation.

The Tribes further recommend that the CCP address surveying and monitoring of nongame birds, as well as amphibians and reptiles.

VISITOR SERVICES

Summary: The CCP provides an opportunity to examine and plan for such public use/access considerations as: visitation projections; desired visitor experiences; fishing access; wildlife watching and photography opportunities; recreation site (picnic areas) availability and management; fee structures; and the possibility of tours.

Key Comments:

In addition to maintenance and replacement of facilities including the visitor center, roads, entrances and the installation and content of signage, visitor services should include maintaining access for the public. Opportunities for education are also important visitor services. Topics could range from cultural to factors that comprise a healthy and functioning ecosystem.

DRAFT

The CCP provides an opportunity to examine and plan for such public use/access considerations as: visitation projections; desired visitor experiences; fishing access; wildlife watching and photography opportunities; recreation site (picnic areas) availability and management; fee structures; and the possibility of tours.
The Tribes anticipate that the CCP would address the following issues related to visitor services:

- •current state of, and future outlook for, the visitor center, including need and potential for replacement;
- •access considerations, including potential for an additional, or alternate, entrance such as at Ravalli Hill;
- •interpretive displays, materials and sale items;
- •information availability and standards/criteria for inclusion of information/materials;
- •education, public awareness, programs and presentations;
- •receipt collection and accountability; and
- •staffing and volunteers

TRIBAL COOPERATION/CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

Summary: We also encourage consideration of the benefits of the Tribes' traditional ecological and cultural knowledge and their special historical, geographic, and cultural relationships with bison and the Range insofar as those deep connections can support the management of natural and cultural resources and the provision of unique public educational and interpretive services at the NBR. Federal laws mandate that the FWS must recognize its responsibility to identify, protect, consult with the tribes about, and otherwise respect such important cultural features, artifacts, etc. This topic should be given thorough thought and discussion.

Key Comments:

The inventory, preservation, and management of cultural and historical resources are high priorities for the Tribes and need to be addressed at some level in the CCP. We have cooperated with the Service in this area in the past, and we look forward to continued collaboration through our Tribal Preservation Department. The Tribes request that the Service consult with us regarding these issues, consistent with Executive Order No. 13175 ("Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments"), the Department of the Interior Policy on Consultation with Indian Tribes, and the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. § 300101 et seq.).

We also think that the CCP should address tribal cultural resources and opportunities for tribal collaboration.

We also encourage consideration of the benefits of the Tribes' traditional ecological and cultural knowledge and their special historical, geographic, and cultural relationships with bison and the Range insofar as those deep connections can support the management of natural and cultural resources and the provision of unique public educational and interpretive services at the NBR. We encourage the USF&WS to consider in the development of the conservation plan and environmental review process the various ways that tribal management can enhance and enrich the visitor experience.

The CSKT clearly have unique cultural and historical connections to the land and bison within the NBR. The proposed CCP and EIS must address how to strengthen this relationship between CSKT and NBR.

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We recognize that the bison or buffalo was THE key animal in the life and livelihood of native people of the Plains and Plateau of North America. Even today, the iconic bison holds immense cultural and spiritual significance for these tribes. The CCP/EIS must take these values into account to design an appropriate future management of the National Bison Range.

It is to be expected that the area contains cultural materials and areas important to the tribes and its members. Federal laws mandate that the FWS must recognize its responsibility to identify, protect, consult with the tribes about, and otherwise respect such important cultural features, artifacts, etc. This topic should be given thorough thought and discussion. The Tribes have previously completed a cultural survey and report under contract to the FWS. The CCP process should provide an appropriate opportunity to analyze that report and decide if additional cultural survey work should be done in the future, its nature, the cooperating parties, and related factors that will lead to properly complying with the law, and the desires of the Tribes and members.

ECONOMICS/REFUGE OPERATIONS/STAFFING

Summary: We recommend a clear and concise business plan that illustrates the associated operational costs, revenue streams, and capital investments necessary to sustain long-term management of the NBR. Against the backdrop of budget projections and the "Realignment Strategy Staffing Framework" and its associated protocols, the CCP should address the existing vacant positions, as well as expected, desired and potential positions looking forward. The CCP should address the Service's plans, expectations, budget and cost outlooks for fire control, as well as controlled bums and other fire-related management issues.

Key Comments:

We recommend a clear and concise business plan that illustrates the associated operational costs, revenue streams, and capital investments necessary to sustain long-term management of the NBR.
Please fund the employment positions for the NBR as it merits for such a successful and shining example of the FWS. If the NBR is at all failing it is because of it's management and poor funding on a national level, not from the efforts and devotion of the current NBR employees or management.
It would be helpful for the CCP to address facilities maintenance expectations, needs, budgets and costs for such facilities as the visitor center, residences, barns and other buildings, roundup facilities, picnic area toilets and structures, fences (exterior and interior), and trails.
Given the Service's Region 6 "Realignment Strategy Staffing Framework", and in light of that document's reference to a prioritization protocol for filling vacancies, the CCP should address the Service's expectations or outlook for enforcement responsibilities and jurisdictional impacts, as well as any cross-deputization expectations, needs or opportunities.

Again, against the backdrop of budget projections and the above-referenced "Realignment Strategy Staffing Framework" and its associated protocols, the CCP should address the existing vacant positions, as well as expected, desired and potential positions looking forward. Staffing, and associated volunteer needs, at the National Bison Range, has been the subject of several articles in local/regional newspapers over recent months, so there is likely considerable public interest in understanding the Service's long-term outlook for Bison Range staffing.

DRAFT

FWS, CSKT and the Bureau of Indian Affairs have historically entered into Annual Fire Management Operating Plan agreements addressing fire control at the National Bison Range. The CCP should address the Service's plans, expectations, budget and cost outlooks for fire control, as well as controlled bums and other fire-related management issues.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE CCP/EIS

Include a substantive section on the history of the CSKT, the NBR, the bison herd and the cultural practices, and traditional values.

The Service must take extra precautions to remain transparent and open to all stakeholders and the public at large.

MISCELLANEOUS OTHER COMMENTS RECEIVED

Transferring the lands, bison and resources of the NBR back into a trust for the CSKT, could reduce the federal bureaucracy and relieve the federal burden and free up funding for other purposes. The economic impacts of the various alternatives, including the potential savings due to transfer of the NBR to the CSKT should be evaluated.

The Service should analyze all of the impacts of transferring the Range to non-federal management

The January NOI is not in compliance with Service planning policy and/or NEPA.

Several comments about the precedent setting nature (both for and against) of the proposed transfer to the Tribes.

Since the NBR staff has been depleted in recent years, it is doubtful that current staff with actual knowledge of conditions at the NBR who should produce a CCP can complete this task without additional staffing. Per Refuge Planning policy, the planning team should include the Refuge manager and key staff members, as well as experts from regional and field offices. 602 FW 3, Sec. 3.4.C(l)(a). This team should engage in pre-planning, gathering of information and data, scoping, consideration of public input, analyzing alternative management options for the NBR as a unit of the NWRS, and all of the other components of the Service's comprehensive planning policy.

Many citizens of western Montana have been harassed, intimidated and even threatened regarding their opinions related to the future of the NBR and the NBRC. FWS has facilitated this in the past by releasing commentor's personal information. FWS should not provide personal information regarding any citizen willing to provide their suggestions and/or opinions in this matter.

Multiple comments about the history of payment to the Tribes for the land and/or the bison herd.

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Summary of Comments Related to the Second Notice of Intent (May 18, 2017)

	Qualities and Opportunities
Wildlife	Refuge provides a 'snap shot' of Montana's wildlife
	Refuge manages plains bison
	Opportunity to revisit wildlife management strategies
	The CCP provides a great opportunity to direct development step-down plans for wildlife management
	CCP can assist FWS in better addressing sharp-tailed grouse reintroduction to NBR
	Develop a new bison management plan based on the Service's nationwide bison meta-population goals
	Time to critically look at and update the fenced animal management plan
	Opportunity to look again at the refuge's coyote control goals and plan (to help antelope recruitment)
	Time to address the need for existing management plans: antelopes, mountain goats, non-trust resources
	I like that you hold and manage bison within the Flathead Indian Reservation
	Since NBR bison herd is founding herd, its conservation and genetics should be paramount in the CCP
	NBR is considered by DOI as an essential part of its commitment to final recovery of the plains bison
	NBR provides habitat for 3 MT Species of Concern, and within range of 3 bat & 22 bird Species of Concern
	CCP is opportunity for FWS to document & address both resident and transient species that use the refuge

	Qualities and Opportunities
Habitat	The refuge is the most invasive plant-free land in Lake County
	Intact maintained ecosystems
	Coordination with surrounding lands for management
	Develop new habitat management plan taking into account the Service nationwide bison population goals
	Maybe a small users fee to drive through NBR would help pay for weed control in the refuge
	NBR has one of the largest remaining remnants of intermountain prairie in the nation – preserve it!
	NBR's unique relict Palouse grassland now integrated with the rare intermountain grassland type places the NBR in a position of being the sole refuge with the responsibility for protection and maintenance of this scarce and valuable habitat type
	Natural settings with highly aesthetic background (Mission Mtn Range and adjacent valley pastoral setting)
	Examine strategies to increase habitat connectivity with & between the NBR and surrounding lands
	NBR's habitats & location in Mission Valley make it a critical wildlife corridor for Flathead Valley animals

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Visitor Services & Outdoor Recreation

Qualities and Opportunities

Diverse opportunities – Birding, Fishing, Scenic/Photographic

Picnic Area: Public support to maintain unique facilities for family gatherings

Environmental education opportunities

Simplicity of usability for public = opportunity

Maintain priorities and mandate, but also define carrying capacity for public use

Nominate Wildlife drive (Red Sleep Mountain Drive) as a scenic highway – funding opportunity

Review and expand Visitor Services and facilities

The plan is an opportunity to think about what experience we want visitors to NBR to have

There are wildlife viewing opportunities and facilities and that are wonderful

Love visiting NBR and seeing all the wildlife and landscape, especially from the upper part of the drive

Look for opportunities to create a wildlife viewing area along Highway 200 along with interpretive signs

Red Sleep Mountain Drive provides views of NBR along the southern slopes; consider adding short trails

NBR is one of the most visited refuges in the country; reach people to foster support for Refuge System

NBR ranks among or exceeds the visitation experienced by the "Urban Refuges" featured by the FWS

Public use of the NBR includes touring, hiking, fishing, wildlife viewing, photography, & environmental Ed.

FWS should ensure enhanced consideration of compatible wildlife-dependent recreational uses in the CCP

Examine and plan for all public use/access considerations (e.g., fee structures, possible tours, picnic area)

Examine current and future outlook for the visitor center, including need and potential for replacement

Consider future interpretive displays, materials and sale items, in native languages and in English

Examine future information availability and standards/criteria for inclusion of information/materials

Cultural Resources

Qualities and Opportunities

Historical value – what it represents - Cultural heritage

Foreign visitors' fascination with U.S. Western history and wilderness drives them to visit NBR

Provide information about the Complex at NBR Visitor Center so that visitors travel to the other units too

Place to learn about natural, cultural and spiritual significance of bison to American Indians & our country

Identify, protect, consult with tribes about, and otherwise respect important cultural features & artifacts

Tribes have previously completed a cultural survey and report under contract to the FWS

American bison has a unique and special place on the landscape: ecological, spiritual and cultural

There are significant cultural sites located on the NBR which were formerly owned in trust for CSKT

CSKT believe that FWS should include in its CCP/EIS some history of the NBR and CSKT involvement

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Partnerships & Communications

Qualities and Opportunities
Knowledge-sharing with neighbors
Community-based approach to invasive species, and other management needs
Messaging to draw visitors: What are the different messages to reach varying visitors?
Need to make sure there is good coordination of multi-agency weed management
Coordination among partners/cooperators nowadays is more reactive, rather than proactive
FWS, State and Tribes should work together, not separately, to manage wildlife on a landscape level
FWS should lead cultivating a relationship with other agencies and create a co-management committee
FWS, CSKT and MTFWP should start working as neighbors rather than unfriendly acquaintances or enemies
Healing bad feelings and mistrust will take time but it is worth the effort for all the Flathead Valley people
Maintain current relationships as well as explore new ones to the betterment of the resources
CSKT could complement the work of other partners working on none refuge lands where FWS is limited
CCP should address potential for opportunities for cooperative efforts with the CSKT at the NBR

Research, Science, Inventory & Monitoring

Qualities and Opportunities
Refuge provides great research opportunities for universities and researchers
Opportunity to address how beneficial are research requests and data for the refuge and for the System
Opportunity to address if there a way to standardize research requests and the decision making process?
Design and conduct a carefully planned, assiduously implemented “integrated pest management program”
CSKT biological staff design & implement various research, I&M programs for resources within Complex

Infrastructure & Operations

Qualities and Opportunities
Highlight priorities/qualities to get funding
Opportunity to address and pursue land swap of the quarter corners area
Great public access
NBRC needs to be again managed as the iconic and respectable refuge it once was
Internal fencing/pastures within NBR constitute a vital component permitting intensive management
Access considerations, including potential for an additional, or alternate, entrance such as at Ravalli Hill
Several newspaper articles on NBR staffing needs indicates likely considerable public interest in NBR future

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Various Other Topics	Qualities and Opportunities
	Open space – lack of development
	Proximity to corridor to Glacier NP
	Identify management priorities and stakeholders – how NBR can fill a gap
	For the agency to integrate objectives from Native American policy into FWS activities
	Need to prioritize issues and make sure CCP focuses on preemptive efforts
	Opportunity for a land swap with the tribe for certain acreage
	Recognize and provide opportunities for CSKT to engage meaningfully in all aspects of NBRC management
	FWS urged to work as closely as possible with CSKT in developing the CCPs for the NBR Complex
	Seek opportunities for CSKT to assume management authority to implement selected management actions
	CSKT could shine in assisting FWS as stakeholder in the area of landscape conservation (i.e., bison)
	CCP provides opportunity to present the public relevant facts on CSKT's with respect to NBR initial herd

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	Issues
Wildlife	Wildlife and domestic animals (cattle) co-mingling which spreads diseases
	Carrying capacity
	Bighorn sheep and diseases: comingling
	Perception that staff doesn't manage bighorn sheep adequately – 80% of bighorn sheep lost to pneumonia
	Fenced wildlife management is challenging; fences not as impermeable as previously thought: what to do?
	Are we managing wildlife for public display: In what direction are the habitats and carrying capacity going?
	Will there be too many visitors to the refuge in the future? Will this lead wildlife to habituate to vehicles?
	Wildlife movements within and without the refuge
	Predator management and refuge being perceived as source of coyotes moving to private lands
	FWS allows excess bison to be transported to be slaughtered; that is merciless and cruel; don't do that
	Each large mammal population on the NBR should be addressed in reasonable detail in the CCP
	The CCP should provide a documented historical outline for management of each species on the NBR
	Concern about wildlife and ecological integrity of wildlife habitat and other NBR land management issues
	A healthy rangeland should be available to support elk, deer, big horn sheep and other roaming species
	CCP needs to address the potential of NBR as grizzly bear habitat, including transient habitat & connectivity
	NBR needs to coordinate with neighbors to manage bear attractants (e.g., fruit trees, beehives, garbage)
	Hope that CCP aspires to carnivore & predator management based on a functioning ecological framework
	Encourage healthy ecosystem (rangeland) to support healthy herds at sustainable population levels
	Concerns over the spread of Chronic Wasting Disease in and around the NBR Complex
	Predators & carnivores as an important element in controlling herd size & the risk of disease and its spread
	CCP should consider opportunities for bison to access areas that may be available adjacent to the NBR
	Identify & describe effects of alternatives on wildlife, particularly regarding obligations under wildlife laws
	CCP should analyze how alternatives fulfill FWS's obligation under Endangered Species Act Section 7(a)(1)
	CCP should consider application of MBTA and BGEPA on NBR to avoid unlawful take of covered bird species
	Consider wildlife-friendly fencing to effectively contain bison while facilitating other species' movements
	Analyze internal fencing's impacts to wildlife and habitat & consider removal to allow natural movements
	The CCP needs to acknowledge CSKT's role in fisheries management at the NBR

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Habitat	Issues
	Enormous issues and problems with invasive plant species variety, distribution, acreage, and dissemination
	Invasive species – existing new ones moving in (milfoil & rush skeleton): highly visible issue
	Weed mitigation on tour road: Use wash station or mass transit to address this problem?
	Finding balance between natural resources and visitors to NBR – 2 million persons drive Hwy 93 annually
	Some areas require forest restoration while other are seeing timber encroachment on prairie habitats
	Intermountain grassland has declined 95% from historic land base.
	Less than 2% of Palouse habitat nationwide. This is a local priority. But, is it a national priority?
	The Jocko River is in need of some stream restoration
	Habitat management plans don't yield immediate results – very complex issue biologically and socially
	Many people don't like to use herbicides to treat invasives, but the drawbacks of not using them is obvious
	NBR should be managed to increase underrepresented habitat types typical of historic area vegetation
	All types of habitat management should be addressed in CCP (e.g., range condition, water management)

Visitor Services & Outdoor Recreation	Issues
	Increased visitation projections and their effect on visitor experience, wildlife, and infrastructure
	No existing compatibility determinations for commercial filming and photography but increasing requests
	Special Use Permits: Commercial tour groups (existing staffing is insufficient to properly manage it)
	Hunting? Why is it seen as being very complicated? Needs to be addressed in the CCP. Tribal youth hunt?
	Expanding the trail system and facilities
	There is a need for a day use area
	Coordination with CSKT on revamping the visitor center in Moiese is the top issue for any new NBR plan
	Add tribal place names and words to informative kiosks around the NBR drive
	Missed opportunities: Tribes' scenic turnout at the top of Ravalli Hill; work with CSKT on informative signs
	Need better understanding of issues related to commercial filming and use of drones
	Lack of staff curtails previous very successful and highly praised outreach programs among Valley schools
	In addition to typical issues, visitor services should include maintaining access for the public
	Opportunities for EE should range from cultural to factors that comprise a healthy ecosystem
	CCP must provide CDs for all individual uses to maintain consistency with wildlife conservation goals
	CCP should describe how each alternative supports the 6 priority wildlife-dependent uses on NBR
	CSKT believe NBR Restoration Act would be effective way to increase public education & visitor experience

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Cultural Resources	Issues
	Why are tribal history, culture, land use, place and animal names being administered from NBR in Moiese?
	Explore & display CSKT and potentially Blackfeet history throughout the Complex (on & off the reservation)
	NBR must be preserved at all costs; it is a vital part of Americana and is crucial to wildlife preservation
	CCP should provide appropriate opportunity to decide if additional cultural survey work should be done
	CCP should detail CSKT's instrumental role in saving the country's last bison at Flathead Indian Reservation
	CCP should detail CSKT's use of current NBR land for hunting, fishing, gathering, cultural & other purposes
	CSKT believes the NBR Restoration Act would be an effective way to address CSKT history with NBR & bison

Partnerships & Communications	Issues
	Take a 'landscape' approach to invasive species management, etc. – Neighborhood Management Plan
	Need to ensure appropriate coordination of multi-agency wildlife surveys
	The refuge needs to find effective ways to improve community outreach and involvement
	Many people tired of commenting and never receiving any feedback (essential to produce quality product)
	FWS failed miserably in communicating the planning process to the public: nothing in local paper, TV, radio
	If FWS truly wants public comments, FWS must convince the public that their efforts will be listened to
	The CCP must be concise, showing historical and proposed future management of the flora and fauna
	FWS must consider how best to establish effective long-term coordination and cooperation with the CSKT

Research, Science, Inventory & Monitoring	Issues
	Air quality & Climate
	Ensure plan monitoring and mitigation = adaptive management
	Maintain and improve what we have and is valuable: tackle and monitor invasive species
	Included the formal & informal research & wildlife mgmt.. studies completed & studies currently underway
	Inclusions of diverse habitats should be inventoried, mapped and maintained at NBR
	Address role of fire and other disturbances in maintaining healthy ecological conditions on the landscape
	CCP should prioritize identification of any new invasive species & have a plan for quickly eradication
	CCP should describe present or potential invasive species (i.e., avian, amphibian, aquatic species, & weeds)
	Address and consider impacts of climate change on rangeland and other ecosystems and wildlife habitat
	Identify monitoring elements to evaluate rangeland conditions and carrying capacity
	Identify monitoring elements to evaluate the health of bison, elk, deer, and bighorn sheep herds
	The CCP should address and encourage development of a proactive plan to address CWD
	Identify opportunities for research including ecological conditions, diversity of plants and animals, etc.
	Include a plan for research and partnering with institutions and agencies both on and off the reservation
	Explain how FWS will monitor status & trends in fish, wildlife, and plants on NBR per Improvement Act
	CCP should include IPMP to prevent & control invasive species, & restore areas affected by weed incursion

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Infrastructure & Operations	Issues
	Define/improve Refuge staff to manage resources and public-use opportunities
	Current staffing levels and positions at NBR are inadequate to meet the purposes and needs
	Ensure visitor safety – difficult with low staffing levels
	Refuge boundary fence built to keep bison in: comingling due to inadequate staffing to maintain fences
	Many refuge quarters are very old: what to do: maintain, replace, and phase out? Some are housing staff.
	Existing facilities are insufficient for current needs: Headquarters office, visitor services building, etc.
	There are poaching issues in the refuge
	Some members of the public would like bring more visitors to the refuge – Move Visitor Center to Hwy 93?
	Relocate NBR entrance along US Highway 93; Moiese is no longer relevant since it is no longer a train stop
	Recruit tribal members to work in technical and support positions at NBR. Make it a priority.
	There is a need to develop a NBR Friends Group
	The Complex staffing chart needs to be filled right away to allow for immediate CCP implementation
	NBR Complex staffing/budget needs should be treated with equal weight as other Region 6 Field Stations
	NBR office and visitor center are very old and need major renovation/replacement (e.g., ADA compliance)
	NBR staff should be selected for their skill, education and experience and not solely due to CSKT affiliation
	Without a minimum of 10 professional staff necessary work cannot be accomplished at the NBR Complex
	The citizens of this nation should always have a say on how NBR and other public lands are managed
	None other CCP was created with the notion of contracting portions of refuge mgmt. to a non-FWS entity
	Delegating refuge programs to a non-federal entity by stripping federal staff of resources breaches policy
	Laws for retention of every refuge in the System were enacted in 1976 opposing refuge co-management
	Amendments to the NWRSAA removed language allowing “other entities” to manage refuge programs
	FWS needs to begin seeking qualified refuge staff according to the previously approved (2015) staffing plan
	FWS should finalize new AFA policy guiding AFA with Tribes on NWRs before negotiating a new CSKT AFA
	CSKT believes the NBR Restoration Act would be an effective way to: manage wildlife and other resources

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	Issues
Various Other Topics	Expansion of wildlife opportunities – acquisition of adjacent lands through cooperation
	FWS should take into consideration all previous comments (over 15+ years) as part of the CCP process
	Local folks feel ignored & don't want to comment more after 15+ years of FWS attempts to give NBR to CSKT
	Lack of sufficient staff and institutional knowledge of previous planning efforts for this planning effort
	Is the planning process to develop the CCP an opportunity for groups and individuals to sue the Service?
	All units of Complex should be considered and addressed in a single CCP; separating them is unwarranted
	Separating units in two CCPs adds unnecessary costs, complexity and inconvenience the public and staff
	Considerably more tax payers dollars will be saved if a single CCP is prepared for the entire Complex
	The planning area is managed as a complex and should be planned as a complex – prepare a single CCP
	No major issues have been identified at this time warranting full blown EIS versus an EA for the NBR
	The Service should allow the process of preparing an EA determine the need for an EIS
	CCP effort must be carried out to fulfil requirements of NWR System Improvement Act and NEPA
	Policy articulated in CCP manual recognizes the refuge manager as the leader of the CCP planning team
	Additional funding and staffing to the Complex should be added immediately to allow CCP development
	Per refuge planning policy the planning team should include, at the very least, the refuge manager, deputy refuge manager, wildlife biologist, visitor services specialists and administrative officer
	It is questionable that Region 6 RO Leadership can be objective and/or capable of an unbiased evaluation
	Under no circumstances should the CSKT be allowed involvement with the CCP as a cooperating agency
	The CSKT should have the same status as other stakeholders, NGO's or the public making views known
	The Service must retain sole and full decision making authority throughout entire CCP process
	Facilitate STEP programs with Salish Kootenai College or University of Montana students in all positions
	Did FWS extend the comment period as another push by CSKT to control the process as well as the NBR?
	FWS needs to stop catering to CSKT because of their continued conflict of interest to take control of NBR
	Any "behind the scenes maneuvering" in the planning process must stop if a quality CCP is to be produced
	Urgent to contact media outlets to set the record straight so general public isn't hesitant to get involved
	The general public is hesitant to get involved as long as the CSKT are controlling the planning effort
	To state that in order to comply with NEPA an EIS and an EA will be produced is ludicrous and wasteful
	FWS must comply with Admin. Procedures Act, analyze all comments received, release the information
	Most local people want FWS to retain complete management control of NBR as the previous 80+
	Support for restoring the lands of the NBR to federal trust ownership for the CSKT based on Treaty
	NBR entirely within borders of Flathead Reservation - reserved by the CSKT in the 1855 Treaty of Hellgate
	The CCP should be all about how to continue the management of NBR, not about who should do it
	CCP should not be approached with blinders, but open to the best partners for the FWS to work with
	NBR belongs to all citizens; shouldn't single out CSKT as "cooperating agency", but should include others

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Various Other Topics	Issues
	Providing adequate funding to continue NBR mission during CCP development and in the implementation
	Use files/data from 1998 NBR CCP effort inclosing comments from staff, partners and neighbors
	Don't discard insightful thoughts provided with much effort and time by many motivated citizens
	CSKT should be the steward of NBR with federal government providing adequate funding
	Complex staff funding levels/restrictions should be based on budgetary, not political concerns
	NBR Complex project leader should organize public meetings with only support of regional office
	No annual funding agreement with the CSKT should be a part of the CCP process
	No special interest group should ever be given any portion of any public/federal land system
	Many objections to CSKT involvement in NBR jobs as such forced employment violates fed. law
	There is no need for CSKT involvement or management of federal taxpayer funds at the NBR
	FWS is in violation of the 1997 NWR System Improvement Act due to a lack of a CCP for NBR
	NBR federal workers, including CSKT members, have been left in limbo and turmoil due to AFAs
	NBR staff should run the CCP process instead of FWS regional staff who are unfamiliar NBR
	Secretary of Interior indicated he wanted refuge managers to have direct control over refuges
	Why was the person hired to write and manage the Complex CCP was excluded from the process
	Regional office personnel cost taxpayers thousands of dollars to fly from Denver for meetings
	Suggesting a preferred alternative before CCP preplanning and/or planning violates Service policy
	Alternatives stating FWS negotiating an AFA would be in direct conflict with CCP purposes
	For this CCP FWS also needs to review comments submitted on the EA for the last proposed AFA
	Recommend that CCP alternatives be left to the public to identify during the planning process
	CCP process requires mandatory public involvement in compliance with mandates and policy
	No personal information addresses should be disclosed unless it is in compliance with the FOIA
	Why isn't the very skillful and knowledgeable planner located at NBR facilitating this CCP effort?
	It's long overdue for the regional leadership to stop the vendetta toward the NBR and its staff
	Strongly opposed to the transfer of the NBR to the CSKT or any other public lands to any tribe
	If the NBR is being managed correctly and competently, why is FWS considering transfer to CSKT?
	Absence of essential NBR staff and basic funding cannot support the demands of initiating a CCP
	CCP should include purposes added in a 1921 Executive Order and in a 1958 Statute (exhibition pasture)
	FWS should withdraw the unwarranted EIS feature from the NBR CCP and prepare an EA instead
	Having CSKT sitting on the "Coordinating Team" would be an unacceptable conflict of interest
	Support for alternative that returns to CSKT control of their traditional lands and cultural resources
	CCP needs to provide explanation of what made FWS change the proposal to transfer NBR to CSKT
	Explain why transferring NBR to CSKT would not equate privatizing public lands or transferring to states
	The CSKT have a special relationship to the NBR that reflects their unique partner situation

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	Issues
Various Other Topics	CCP should evaluate economic impacts of various alternatives including savings due to NBR transfer (CSKT)
	FWS must meaningfully engage with the CSKT in all phases of development of the EIS and CCP
	FWS should honor its intent to invite the CSKT to participate in the CCP process as a cooperating agency
	CCP is legally required to be a plan for refuge mgmt. of a unit of NWRS and not be a vehicle for abolition
	Concerned about how CCP process is being carried out & whether it can result in a policy-based robust CCP
	Engaging in 2 separate CCP/NEPA processes at once greatly increases workload and burden on Refuge staff
	An EIS is a far more demanding and resource-intensive process than the usual process of preparing an EA
	Running CCP/NEPA process from the RO cannot substitute for leadership and contributions at refuge level
	Why was the NBR refuge manager sidelined in the CCP scoping meetings that have already taken place?
	FWS is not following its own CCP manual, casting doubt on whether there will be a legitimate CCP process
	Issuance of NOI should not have occurred without prior planning steps (e.g, assembling the planning team)
	No indication that required preplanning has occurred to date, casting doubt on seriousness of CCP process
	FWS has also already held two public scoping meetings that served little or no legitimate purpose
	Scoping meetings were also poorly publicized and poorly attended; as if only to check off a required box
	Plans for NBR management as a part of NWRS should be completed before considering any other AFA
	Attempting to meld CCP process with an AFA process could significantly delay already long-overdue CCP
	CCP process should be restarted according with the CCP manual, with adequate staffing and resources
	Public and stakeholder involvement & input is a basic NEPA principle and should be embedded in CCP
	Important that FWS comply with CCP policy dictating that the NBR project leader be the leader of the CCP
	A quality staff of several different disciplines should be engaged to carry out the CCP planning process
	NBR program is a field based program and decisions are always best when made at the field level
	FWS should immediately replace refuge staff removed over recent years so planning process is credible
	A proper pre-planning process requires 100s of hours of work to find and assemble all necessary data
	Without a properly developed & run preplanning process it is impossible to develop an implementable CCP
	Essential for FWS to identify & summarize options & issues that properly fall within sideboards & scope
	FWS must take extra precautions to remain transparent and open to all stakeholders & the public at large
	FWS must retain sole and full decision-making authority throughout the CCP process as required by law
	NBR project leader should not just a bystander expected to implement a garbage in / garbage out plan
	The FWS Region 6 Directorate should not be pre-selecting an alternative that will require an EIS for NBR
	CSKT should comply with the NWRSAA delineations on co-management of Ninepipe NWR and Pablo NWR
	FWS should not initiate negotiations on AFA, coop agreement or land transfer until the CCP is completed
	Each CCP alternative must examine how management achieves refuge goals & upholds Congress mandates
	Misleading to imply that most comments to Jan. 2017 opposed to the preferred alternative stated by FWS

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Summary of Comments Related to the Third Notice of Intent (May 18, 2017)

	Qualities and Opportunities
Wildlife	The plan will afford the opportunity to address the benefits of the existing "islands" in Ninepipe NWR
	Opportunity to address the need for removal of predator friendly habitat features on WPAs
	Flathead WPA & adjacent north shore lands support a high number and diversity of birds (229+ species)
	Several species of special concern are found in the Ashley Creek drainage (shared by various WPAs)
	Considering multiple habitat objectives may provide more migratory bird or other wildlife benefits
	Consider future passage for native amphibians and reptiles where they occur: roads tend to be a barrier
	Consider optimum size and configuration of each Complex parcel needed to meet wildlife needs/objectives
	Maintaining large-sized snags and downed wood throughout Complex lands
	Maintain healthy grassland and rangeland habitats for healthy grassland species populations
	CCP should address specific bird populations & management coop efforts, including Trumpeter swans
	Bird habitat conservation motivated designating Pablo & Ninepipe NWRs, this should be prominent in CCP
	CSKT expects big game and all other wildlife species and predator management to be addressed in the CCP

	Qualities and Opportunities
Habitat	Time to address the need for removal of stock ponds in Lost Trail NWR
	Opportunity to address in detail the grazing and farming management on waterfowl production areas
	Opportunity to address in detail all restoration efforts needed in waterfowl production areas
	WPAs have unique qualities worth preserving and maintaining for current and future generations
	In 2009 Montana Audubon designated Flathead WPA & adjacent north shore lands as Important Bird Area
	U of MT researchers describe Flathead Lake as one of the cleanest lakes in populated areas in the world
	Flathead Lake WPA wetlands and vegetated riparian buffers help protect water quality in Flathead Lake
	Complex lands are becoming increasingly vital to sustaining migratory and resident birds and wildlife
	Complex lands sustain T&E plants and animals and healthy populations of game and nongame species
	The quality of the Complex habitats are important for wildlife under development and agriculture pressure
	Complex units are an integral and irreplaceable part of a larger mosaic of protected lands in western MT
	Value of Complex lands will become increasingly important as development and climate pressures increase
	Need greater habitat protection and improvement over time as Complex lands are critically important
	Maintain and enhance Complex habitats to ensure wildlife movement and ecological processes function

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Visitor Services & Outdoor Recreation	Qualities and Opportunities
	The CCP affords the opportunity to address the need and maintenance of trails and associated structures
	Flathead Lake WPA "beach" attracts hundreds of visitors. Is this an environmental education opportunity?
	Lost Trail NWR is a great place to see native flora and fauna.
	Great opportunities to attended excellent educational programs and field trips at Lost Trail NWR
	Find creative management strategies allowing public to enjoy as well as conserve Complex values
	Don't underestimate value of Flathead Lake WPA in providing/maintaining iconic scenic beauty
	Smith Lake WPA is a magnet for birds as well as bird watchers, fishermen, and other visitors
	The units of Complex provide innumerable opportunities for field trips and outdoor recreation
	Bring cross-section of the community out to Complex units to learn/appreciate/understand
	Celebrate 10-year anniversaries with field trips and other outdoor recreational events
	Encourage school programs emphasizing importance of local wildlife, hunting, and open space
	Send out newsletters, use social media to share what it is you have
	Complex lands have highly desired public recreational opportunities near population centers
	Create strategically located self-guided trails, boardwalks, viewing towers, field trips, classes, etc.
	Explore new wildlife watching and hunting opportunities that also allows for various other uses
	CCP provides an opportunity to examine and plan for public uses and access considerations
	Re: access by CSKT citizens, CSKT believe the existing MOA between FWS and CSKT works well
	CCP should address all visitor services issues for Ninepipe & Pablo NWRs in NBR visitor center

Cultural Resources	Qualities and Opportunities
	Blasdel WPA: historic Blasdel Barn is very photogenic and highly cherished by local community
	Widespread interest on Blasdel Barn for commercial filming and photography. Can this be an opportunity?
	Breathtaking views offered to all by Flathead Lake WPA is important to the cultural identity of the area
	The Blackfeet (Pikuni) people may have some history near Lost Trail NWR – find ways to display this
	Explore & display CSKT and potentially Blackfeet history throughout the Complex (on & off the reservation)
	Ninepipe & Pablo NWRs are each on lands that are beneficially-owned by CSKT, and held in trust by the US
	Revisit FWS interaction with Tribal citizens, Reservation community re: indigenous culture, language, & land uses
	FWS becomes a leader in how federal agencies approach partnerships with tribal governments in Indian country
	Inventory, preservation, and management of cultural and historical resources in CCP are CSKT high priority
	CSKT request that FWS consult with CSKT regarding issues consistent with Executive Order No. 13175
	Address FWS to recruit federal staff with knowledge of local tribal culture, or train existing staff accordingly
	Opportunity to revisit FWS' approaching TEK regarding Ninepipe, Pablo, Lost Trail NWR & NW MT WMD

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Partnerships & Communications	Qualities and Opportunities
	Partner with local, state, and tribal agencies, conservation organizations, and others to identify needs
	Work with partners to help identify strategies and solutions that increase government resources efficiency
	Creatively use local skills and resources to improve management within context of surrounding landscapes
	Management solutions require engaging/partnering with adjacent agricultural producers and neighbors
	Partner with neighbors to address wildlife viewing, access, invasive species, and law enforcement issues
	Partner with River to Lake group to protect ecologically significant areas near and provide buffers to WPAs
	Work with MTFWP to complement management and goals of the North Shore WMA and Flathead L. WPA
	Partner with River to Lake in protecting Blasdel WPA and properties surrounding it as wildlife corridor
	Partner with River to Lake to restore riparian habitat and improve water quality, fish and wildlife habitat
	Maintain and increase habitat conservation partnerships with River to Lake throughout the Flathead Valley
	Consider the place that individual and collective CCPs have in the context of other conservation programs
	Consider the specific values/contributions that Complex units add to local/regional/international efforts
	Work cooperatively with neighbors, land trusts, and agencies to preserve/enhance farmlands and soils
	Share, coordinate, and develop complementary plans to cut costs and efficiently address weed control
	Work cooperatively with adjoining landowners to extend the FWS area of influence over a larger landscape
	Seek partners and creative fund-raising to incorporate into the Complex or protect additional parcels
	Work with neighbors to establish/re-establish a more historical and sensible fire regime
	Partner with volunteers and with local fire agencies to help reduce adverse impacts of fires
	Design an outreach program to increase local support for the lands, volunteer base, & improvement ideas
	Partners and foundations are often willing to fund these various kinds of projects on public lands
	CCP should acknowledge history & future Tribal cooperation with FWS in Ninepipe & Pablo NWRs

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Research, Science, Inventory & Monitoring

Qualities and Opportunities
Ongoing research on ospreys regarding water quality issues (mercury) on reservoir fish (specially Ninepipe)
Public benefits of these units are significant and require commensurate level of management and research
Monitoring helps ensure management is responding appropriately to resources stressors and challenges
Conduct research and monitoring collaboratively to collect needed information to protect landscape value
Use American Bird Conservancy surveys that validate and record Flathead Lake and Smith Lake WPA values
Propose in the CCPs to manage with climate change in mind so that there is a degree of flexibility
A cross-section of the community could visit units of the Complex to develop/implement useful projects
Develop educational and research programs unique to each area designed for next generation employees
Create/publicize rules that restrict wildlife collection for recreational or scientific study
Closely monitor and when indicated, decrease cattle-grazing to benefit wildlife habitats
CSKT recommend CCP address surveying & monitoring of nongame birds, as well as amphibians & reptiles
CCP should address contingencies for aquatic invasive species whose profile was recently elevated in MT
Address any projected wildlife, habitat, animal health, or genetics activities or needs in the CCP
Address projected, likely, or potential impacts of climate change on habitat, species, water, forage and fire

Infrastructure & Operations

Qualities and Opportunities
Time to address DNRC state leases (school trust lands) and land exchanges with Lost Trail NWR
Opportunity to figure out and clarify what water rights the Service has in units of the Complex
Opportunity to develop a brand new prescribed fire plan for the waterfowl production areas
Revisit staffing priorities and structures to ensure that Lost Trail NWR and the WPAs achieve their missions
Staff positions in all units of the Complex should be increased to ensure widespread compatible public uses
Current staff levels are far from sufficient to meet the needs and pressures placed on the Complex units
Each CCP needs to identify needs, locations, and opportunities to expand its boundaries/protect lands
Increase staffing to closer to historical levels so that the CCPs can be properly implemented
Ensure that all infrastructure, wildlife/plant/natural barriers, and traffic speeds are wildlife friendly
Ensure all Complex structures are screened or capped to prevent entrapment of cavity seeking wildlife
CCP process can address in depth the history before, during & after establishing Ninepipe & Pablo NWRs
CSKT has valid existing rights Tribal uses recognized by Congress within Ninepipe NWR and Pablo NWR
Reservoir conditions & water management issues are all components that should be addressed in the CCP
Address facilities maintenance expectations, needs, budget & costs for facilities, including fences and trails
Address FWS expectations or outlook for LE responsibilities & jurisdictional impacts and cross-deputization
Address the existing vacant positions, as well as expected, desired and potential positions looking forward
Address FWS plans, expectations, budget & cost outlooks for fire control and management, prescribed fire

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Various Other Topics	Qualities and Opportunities
	Develop comprehensive plans for each unit taking into account regional landscape and conservation needs
	Goals should consider Complex units within larger landscapes, stressors, and area conservation programs
	Assess how Complex units complement and strengthen local, regional, and transboundary conserv. efforts
	Importance and public benefits that Complex provides have increased as Flathead Valley grows/develops
	WPAs in Flathead Valley truly deserve thoughtful consideration to ensure endurance of benefits provided
	Manage in Complex lands in context with local, regional, and international conservation efforts
	CCPs should consider the land context and value to wildlife as well as their value to buffer development
	If applicable, establish a means to ensure each property has sufficient water rights in perpetuity
	Whenever possible, control, minimize, or decrease light pollution throughout the Complex's habitats
	To the extent possible reduce noise pollution or use vegetation or other means throughout Complex lands
	NRCS is always available to assist FWS on WRP Program objectives, or specific easement goals & objectives
	CCP would assist in helping public understanding of FWS' newly-designated Western MT NWR Complex
	FWS leads how federal agencies approach federal trust responsibility towards tribes within NWR mgmt.
	CSKT encourage FWS to examine Canadian Wildlife Service's Impact and Benefit Agreements on NWAs
	CSKT believe CCP presents opportunity for FWS to encourage field-level implementation of FWS' TEK

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	Issues
Wildlife	Mercury levels in refuges fish (especially Ninepipe reservoir) also affecting raptors (osprey)
	Complex staff don't manage the fisheries resources on the reservoirs in Ninepipe and Pablo NWRs
	Lost Trail NWR is home to various Federally and state listed species, which require special management
	Lost Trail NWR: issues with nonnative fish species on streams and nonnative plant species in wet meadows
	Issues with hunting of non-approved species (bears, coyotes, ground squirrels, etc.) in Lost Trail NWR
	There are issues with wolf management in Lost Trail NWR
	Blasdel WPA: is surrounded by urban development, has non-native habitat with little native wildlife value
	Is the increasing and spreading urban encroachment around Flathead Lake WPA affecting the wildlife?
	Consider what the best or multiple values (e.g., breeding, rearing, migratory) that Complex lands have
	A diversity of habitat or management objectives over Complex units should be evaluated with public input
	Invasive species should be dealt with best management practices to avoid impacts to native plants/animals
	FWS exists to offer up animal bodies for murder and killing; I want humane treatment of all animals
	We need much more consideration of what the handling of the bison will be at NBR
	Other wildlife needs to be protected too on our national lands, such as wild horses
	The CCP should address CSKT's management of the fisheries resources in Ninepipe NWR and Pablo NWR

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	Issues
Habitat	Enormous issues and problems with invasive plant species variety, distribution, acreage, and dissemination
	CSKT and the Complex have very different habitat management priorities in Pablo and Ninepipe NWRs
	CSKT and Complex habitat and reservoir management priorities is not conducive to migratory bird mgmt.
	There are significant cattle trespass issues on Pablo NWR and insufficient communications
	Refuges reservoirs help spread invasive species via thousands of miles of irrigation system carrying seeds
	Elk populations are heavily impacting Lost Trail NWR aspen habitats
	Lost Trail NWR staff are in need of a Spalding's catchfly recovery plan to help guide habitat management
	Grazing by free ranging cattle upstream from Lost Trail NWR causing siltation problems on refuge habitats
	There are timber encroachment issues on Lost Trail NWR habitats
	Weyerhaeuser has requested Lost Trail NWR to change easement language to be able to sell its properties
	Flathead WPA is IBA listed; many weed issues and funding has been inadequate to address invasive species
	There are increasing issues with development encroachment around Smith Lake WPA
	This is national public land, not local land for profiteers or federal and state employees to maul
	We need land to preserve and protect wildlife and birds; that should be the aim of this plan
	There should be no burning, no chemical applications, no new roads built, and no logging allowed
	Grazing violations in Ninepipe NWR and Pablo NWR have contributed to invasive weed infestations
	There are impacts to Ninepipe NWR and Pablo NWR habitats from unauthorized farming practices
	Lack of funding and staffing have prevented NBR Complex from complying with its Integrated Pest Mgmt.
	Complex needs to fully comply with State/County weed control laws governing landowner responsibility
	Consider the separate and cumulative impacts that invasive species, climate change and urbanization have
	Cattle profiteers should be taken out from our public lands, and they should buy or lease their own land
	Grazing violations in Ninepipe NWR and Pablo NWR contribute to widespread invasive weed infestations
	Unauthorized farming practices have degraded wildlife habitats within designated refuge boundaries

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Visitor Services & Outdoor Recreation	Issues
	Ninepipe and Pablo NWRs are currently closed, to the general public, to trapping and hunting
	Safety and legal issues need to be addressed due to road hunting adjacent to Lost Trail NWR
	Waterfowl hunting on Lost Trail NWR: redraw hunting boundaries? Insufficient staff and waterfowl studies
	Due to level of visitation, Smith Lake WPA is in need of additional parking and a boat launch
	Smith Lake WPA has off-road vehicle trespass, vandalism, fires, and parking lot parties issues
	Trapping issues on the NW MT Wetland Management Districts waterfowl production areas
	Issues with availability and maintenance of trails and associated structures on waterfowl production areas
	Hundreds of trespass instances every year on Flathead Lake WPA from people wanting to use the beach
	Almost impossible to post boundary signs in parts of Flathead Lake WPA because of lake level variations
	There should be no hunting or trapping to cause misery and torture to wildlife. Protect and preserve them.
	Calling the murder of wildlife and birds "wildlife dependent recreation" is a disgusting and deplorable scam
	Killing and trapping wildlife is brutality and insanity
	Recreation in and near WPAs pose increasing challenges requiring increased education and interpretation
	Fix up dilapidated walking path, outhouse, and weed and bee-infested recreation area at Ninepipe NWR
	Ninepipe and Pablo NWRs are sorely underused for environmental education
	Trails: Need to be inspected, upgraded and replaced as needed for safety, staff needs, and public access
	Joint wildlife viewing trail for Ninepipe NWR (Tribe, State and FWS) needs replacement & weed control

Cultural Resources	Issues
	Lost Trail NWR staff is having issues with the maintenance of historic buildings on the refuge
	Lost Trail NWR staff need to find ways to secure currently unprotected pictographs and address access
	Blasel WPA: historic Blasdel Barn is in a state of disrepair and there are many trespass issues with it
	Blasel WPA: historic Blasdel Barn is a liability issue – what to do with it? Keep it? Divest area? Restore it?
	Blasel WPA: historic Blasdel Barn would cost nearly $1 million to restore it solely for preservation purposes
	Blasel WPA: serious law enforcement issues with trespassing and arson fire danger

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Partnerships & Communications	Issues
	Lack of sufficient communications between CSKT and the Complex on reservoir management and farming
	Insufficient communications between CSKT and the Complex on leases for grazing and farming on refuges
	Complex personnel unable to establish effective communications with different tribal departments
	The Complex needs to find effective ways to improve community outreach and involvement
	It appears that the public has some confusion about the management of Smith Lake WPA
	Recreation in and near WPAs pose increasing challenges requiring increased management, outreach, & LE
	Public outreach is a paramount need for the Complex to ensure success and long-term programs
	Most of the public has no idea who manages the Flathead County WPAs and who to contact
	Lack of info re: the units involved in this CCP proposal precluded detailed ideas, comments or suggestions

Research, Science, Inventory & Monitoring	Issues
	Address changing weather patterns, including extended summer droughts and increased temperatures
	Need to address the value that Complex units provide for wildlife, water/groundwater quality & quantity
	Overall goals and objectives should be based on science and wildlife needs, rather than current budgets
	Control first the invasive species that have the greatest impact on native species and habitats
	Identify extent, distribution, and impacts of invasive species to habitats/wildlife and management strategy
	Each CCP should have a solid integrated noxious weed plan (and include funding), including partnerships
	Ensure proper staffing to allow professional oversight and coordination with scientific studies
	Lack of funding/staffing prevented Complex from complying with its integrated pest management program

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Infrastructure & Operations	Issues
	Complex staffers are unclear on their management authority on Ninepipe and Pablo NWRs
	Inability to enforce wildlife and other conservation-related laws on Ninepipe and Pablo NWRs
	Lost Trail NWR has great need for maintenance staffing and fencing crew
	There are many leased-land cattle trespass cases in Lost Trail NWR due to unmaintained fence
	Lost Trail NWR has great need of a habitat management plan, a fire plan, and fire funding
	Lost Trail NWR staff has great need of a report detailing the refuge's water rights
	Some members of the public have made requests for grazing on Lost Trail NWR lands
	Realignment calls for no staff at Lost Trail NWR; so no full-time officer to address trespass issues
	Issues of water rights on WPAs: some un-adjudicated or no water rights owned at all
	Lack of uniformity of prescribed fire management: varies among WPAs and refuges
	Uncertain status and need for repair and maintenance of fences and water control structures
	Difficulties with the manipulation of water levels on WPAs
	Issues in Batavia WPA: unmaintained dikes, flooding neighbors: highway department mitigation
	Weyerhaeuser logging activities and transportation causing access issues at Smith Lake WPA
	Lost Trail NWR staff has issues with ability to enforce laws on Smith Lake WPA
	Enormous difficulties enforcing closure of parts of Flathead Lake WPA – MT was sued trying it
	Complex staff doesn't have the personnel or means to patrol Flathead Lake WPA appropriately
	There are intrusion issues on Pablo NWR related to the CSKT-operated Race Track on site
	FWS is far too stupid for giving away our national land to cheap leasing to plunderers and profiteers
	Violations of easement conditions and an intrusion into the Pablo NWR by a CSKT operated Race Track
	Ninepipe and Pablo NWRs should only be used by CSKT for purposes compatible with the refuge purposes
	Congress reiterated CSKT rights to Ninepipe & Pablo NWR lands for purposes not inconsistent with easements
	MOU between FWS, CSKT and BIA recognized farming program within NWRs as consistent with NWR purposes
	As part of US legislation, CSKT retains congressionally-recognized reserved rights in Ninepipe and Pablo NWRs

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	Issues
Various Other Topics	Uncertainty of the compliance status of the conservation easements due to insufficient inspections
	Differences in land use regulations among refuge neighbors and partners (Tribes and County governments)
	Why is Swan River NWR not in Complex even though it is in same watershed and mentioned in realignment
	There are various and diverse encroaching issues bearing on Pablo NWR, Ninepipe NWR, and the WPAs
	Complex staffers don't fully understand the issues between the tribal and county water rights: compact
	Safety (poor visibility due to dust) and road condition issues adjacent to Lost Trail NWR from logging trucks
	Might CSKT want to include ancestral lands (e.g., Lost Trail NWR) on future Annual Funding Agreements?
	Want that on national public lands, owned by Americans, you to stop acting so notoriously ugly to wildlife
	If what you are planning is wildlife and bird murder, let the public know what you are really about
	Public lands belong to the American public and they need honesty. Don't use obfuscating language
	Lack of information regarding units involved in the CCP precludes detailed ideas, comments or suggestions.
	Had FWS followed usual preplanning steps more would have had opportunity to respond more fully
	Continuing and troubling compatibility issues at Ninepipe NWR and Pablo NWR involving the CSKT
	Previous AFA negotiations have precluded the Complex from addressing issues identified in late 1990s
	All units of Complex should be considered and addressed in a single CCP; separating them is unwarranted
	Separating units in two CCPs adds unnecessary costs, complexity and inconvenience the public and staff
	Prepare all overdue CCPs within Region 6 before revisiting the Lost Trail NWR CCP, which is not due yet
	Considerably more tax payers dollars will be saved if a single CCP is prepared for the entire Complex
	The planning area is managed as a complex and should be planned as a complex – prepare a single CCP
	WRP easements adjoining Complex lands and their provisions should be points of focus in planning process
	Incorporate WRP mission and management objectives into the CCPs planning process and objectives
	Avoid incorporating management scenarios into CCPs that conflict with WRP Program statutes/easements
	We are sick & tired that FWS seems to hire & put in charge only wildlife murderers, beginning with D. Ash
	Want investigation on FWS hiring practices; Is there a requirement to murder wildlife in employment app?
	Had FWS completed preplanning steps there would have been opportunity to respond fully during scoping
	Lack of opportunity for preplanning prevents certainty of possible compatibility issues on all Complex units
	FWS should include history and legal status of the Ninepipe and Pablo NWRs in the CCPs to educate public
	Public may be unaware of CSKTs' ownership of the lands upon which Ninepipe & Pablo NWRs are located
	CSKT had a role in originally requesting Ninepipe and Pablo be federally-designated as conservation areas
	CSKT granted a perpetual easement to US for use of the Ninepipe & Pablo properties for refuge purposes
	It is in both CSKT's and FWS' best interest in educating people about NWRs historical and legal landscape
	CSKT asks cooperative efforts with CSKT to be addressed in the EA under all the CCP/EA alternatives

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Purposes, Vision and Goals Workshop Report

On November 7, 2017, members of the Planning Team for the National Bison Range Complex (NBR Complex) Comprehensive Conservation Plans (CCP) participated in a workshop to develop a draft vision statement and a set of draft goals.

The participants were:

From the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes:	Dennis Clairmont, Brian Upton and Dale Becker
From Sanders County:	Gale Decker, Wally Congdon, and Pat Jamieson
From the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:	Bernie Petersen, Kevin Shinn, Marlin McDonald, Amy Lisk, Beverly Skinner, Tom Reed, Rob Bundy, Kelly Hogan, Matthew McCollister, Vanessa Fields, and Bernardo Garza

After revisiting and commenting on the establishing purposes for each of the units of the NBR Complex, and reviewing the list of qualities, opportunities and issues raised during the scoping period, the Planning Team set out to develop a draft vision and a set of draft goals for the CCPs.

The workshop participants formed three groups and developed the following draft a vision statements for the NBR Complex:

Draft Visions

Group 1

> Relax, take a deep breath while you take a step back in time to reflect on what was, what is, and what is yet to come. Immerse yourself in diverse landscapes shaped by glacial/geologic forces steeped in rich cultural history. [5 votes]
>
> NBRC provides an opportunity to learn and experience varied habitats, abundant wildlife and the natural beauty of these lands. [3 votes]
>
> Foster partnerships and promote education to repair and preserve intact functioning ecosystems in a rapidly changing environment.

Group 2

> Envision a time when wildlife could flow freely across the landscape. This inter-montane prairie is where wolves are peak hunters, where early conservationists preserved bison, small endangered Spalding's catchfly are valued, expansive meadows of blue camas blanket the valley, and ancient cultures continue to thrive. [3 votes]

The NBRC safeguards these values as well as species of concern forming a continuity through time for future generations to experience and treasure.

The NBRC will work through conservation, preservation, and restoration to maintain an ecological system. [1 vote]

We will partner with others to foster cultural and natural resource conservation. Since many of the units are within the Flathead Indian Reservation and all are within the homelands of the Tribes, unique opportunities to work with partners exist. [5 votes]

Group 3

Memorialize and pay tribute to the persons and peoples who set aside the lands, wildlife, and plants that created the various components that make up the refuge complex. [2 votes]

Conserve the scenery and the natural and cultural resources of the components of the refuge complex. [1 vote]

Facilitate scientific interest and research in the refuge complex, public education, and utilization and enjoyment of the refuge complex. [2 votes]

Ensure wildlife and people enjoy appropriate opportunity to use, utilize, and experience lands, resources, and habitats. [2 votes]

Manage the refuge complex and its individual units as part of the NWR System. Acknowledging the uniqueness of each component and their respective occupants. [9 votes]

To accomplish these goals of the refuge complex, our vision includes the following:

(insert here the goals of the NWR System) [1 vote]

The three draft vision statements were posted for all to see. Each participant was provided with three sticky dots with which they voted on their favorite sections of the draft vision statements. After the vote, the entire Planning Team regathered and, based on the votes (shown in brackets) the following combined vision statement was developed and subsequently edited.

Combined Draft Vision

Relax and take a deep breath while you step back in time to reflect on what was, what is and what is yet to come. Immerse yourself in the inter-montane valleys of northwestern Montana shaped by glacial forces and steeped in rich cultural history.

This is a special landscape important to people age after age, where we pay tribute to the persons and peoples who set aside the lands, conserved the wildlife and plants, and were stewards of various components that make up the complex.

Visitors from all over the world travel to the NBR Complex which seeks to provide an opportunity to learn and experience varied habitats, abundant wildlife and the natural beauty of these lands.

NBRC safeguards these values and preserves connectivity across the landscape, forming continuity through time for future generations to treasure.

Each unit is unique, and collectively they have, and will continue, to contribute to the NBR Complex and the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Partners foster cultural and natural resources conservation where the cultural history is expressed across the landscape. Unique opportunities to work with partners benefit many of the units within the Flathead Indian Reservation and other units located within traditional homelands of the Salish, Upper Pend d'Oreille, and Kootenai Tribes.

After developing the draft vision statement, the Planning Team began the development of a set of draft goals for the CCPs. The Planning Team brainstormed potential goal topics and then formed the following three groups, based on expertise and interests:

Potential Goal Topics	Persons in the Group
Bison, Wildlife Management, Habitat Management, T&E Species, Ecological Integrity, Invasive Species, Research and Science	Amy, Beverly, Dale, Kevin
Cultural Resources, Partnerships, Public Uses	Pat, Tom, Rob, Gale, Marlin
Collaboration, Monitoring and Mitigation, Administration, Operations	Wally, Brian, Bernie, Dennis

These groups gathered to decide what might be the necessary goal topics for the CCPs and developed the following preliminary draft goals:

<u>Wildlife Management</u>
Protect, maintain, and restore a healthy and diverse wildlife populations with respect to species that are endemic, migratory, and mandated species of concern.

<u>Invasive Species</u>
Inventory, monitor, and evaluate threats to Service lands from invasive species to effectively manage, protect, restore, maintain.

<u>Habitat Management</u>
Conserve, restore and promote biological integrity and functional ecologically diverse habitats.

<u>Research and Science</u>
Encourage the use of high quality research to promote scientifically sound management decisions.

Monitoring and Mitigation

Through the life of the CCP we will monitor and evaluate the consequences of our actions and evaluate the response use adaptive management to reach desired outcomes.

Administration and Operations

Effectively use funding, staff, partnerships, volunteers and equipment to restore and manage refuge complex habitats, conduct programs, and improve and maintain all necessary infrastructure to the benefit of the NBRC and the Refuge System.

NEPA definition: Mitigation includes: a) avoiding impact altogether; b) limiting the degree of the impact; c) repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected environment; d) reducing the impact by preservation opportunities; or e) compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments or opportunities.

Tribal Collaboration

We will collaborate with tribal government in a manner consistent with the Service's Native American policy and with other Federal, State, and local government entities in a manner consistent with applicable Service policies.

Partnerships

A wide range of partners join with NBRC to support wildlife and habitat conservation, research, foster awareness and appreciation of natural and cultural resources and provide education (along with the necessary infrastructure) of the inter-montane ecosystem of western MT.

Public Use

Provide compatible wildlife dependent recreation and education opportunities for persons of all abilities to learn, enjoy, and appreciate the inter-montane ecosystem of western MT, the fish, wildlife and plants.

Cultural Resources

Preserve and value the cultural resources and history of the NBRC to connect staff, visitors and community to the area's past and continuing traditions.

The preliminary draft goals were posted for all to see. The entire Planning Team spent a few minutes reading the goals and writing notes or comments on the goals. Afterwards, the entire Planning Team regathered and, based on the comments the entire Planning Team worked on editing the goals to read as follows:

Draft Goals for the NBR Complex CCPs

Wildlife Management Goal

Protect, maintain, and restore healthy and diverse wildlife populations with respect to species that are endemic, migratory, and mandated species of concern.

Habitat Management Goal

Conserve, restore, and promote biological integrity in functional and sustainable ecologically diverse habitats of the inter-montane ecosystem of western Montana

Invasive Species Goal

Prevent, reduce, and contain the invasion and spread of noxious, invasive, and harmful nonnative species within the Complex while working with partners to address off-Complex infestations within the surrounding landscape.

Research and Science Goal

Encourage high quality research and promote the use of scientifically sound management decisions.

Monitoring and Adaptive Management Goal

Through the life of this plan, we will monitor and evaluate the consequences of our actions and use adaptive management to reach desired outcomes.

Public Use Goal

Provide compatible, wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities, for persons of all abilities, to learn, enjoy, and appreciate the inter-montane landscape of western Montana, the fish and wildlife and plants.

Cultural Resources Goal

Preserve and value the cultural resources and history of the National Bison Range Complex to connect staff, visitors, and community to the area's past and continuing traditions.

Partnerships and Collaboration Goal

Maintain and cultivate partnerships that help achieve the vision and supporting goals and objectives of the National Bison Range Complex to support wildlife and habitat conservation, research, foster awareness and appreciation of natural and cultural resources and provide education along with all necessary infrastructure of the inter-montane ecosystem of western Montana.

Recognizing its importance, we will collaborate with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and other Tribal governments in a manner consistent with the Service's Native American policy and with other Federal, State, and local government entities in a manner consistent with applicable Service policies.

Administration and Operations Goal

Effectively use funding, staff, partnerships, volunteers, and equipment to restore and manage Complex habitats, conduct programs, and improve and maintain all necessary infrastructure to the benefit of the Complex and the Refuge System.

After reviewing the progress made during the workshop and the next steps in the planning process the workshop was adjourned.

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Brian Upton; David Redhorse; Gale Decker; Jennifer Ekberg; Neil Anderson
Cc:	Kelly Hogan; Vanessa Fields; Bernie Petersen; McCollister, Matthew; Kevin Shinn
Subject:	Vision and Goals Workshop Report and Draft Scoping Report
Date:	Friday, November 17, 2017 12:23:27 PM
Attachments:	DRAFT NBRC CCPs Scoping Report.pdf PVG Workshop Report.pdf

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Planning Team,

I'm attaching a couple of documents with this email message.

One of them is a "report" on the purposes, vision, and goals workshop activities and results. This document contains that draft vision statement and the draft goals developed by the participants in the workshop. I want to ask you to review it and give me any comments and/or suggestions you may have on the draft vision and goals (i.e., this is your opportunity to wear your "editing" hat and help the Planning Team in making the draft vision and goals succinct and eloquent).

The other document is the same Draft Scoping Report that was handed out during last week's workshop. I ask that you review it and provide me any edits/changes/additions that you want to propose to this report.

Please provide me with your comments/edits/additions by the end of November 2017.

Thank you.

--

Bernardo Garza
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From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Kelly Hogan
Cc:	Vanessa Fields; Bernie Petersen; McCollister, Matthew; Kevin Shinn
Subject:	Alternatives Workshop scheduling
Date:	Friday, November 17, 2017 3:39:54 PM

Hello Folks,

Vanessa and I have been looking very hard at the alternatives workshop format, possible scheduling options, and necessary preparations to be successful.

We are increasingly concerned that the currently proposed January 11-12 date, being so close to major holidays, might not work for all the members of the Planning Team to prepare well and/or participate in the workshop. Also, we are not sure we can finish gathering and reviewing all the data and information necessary for the workshop, and which normally is gathered during preplanning, before January 11. We feel that it is critical for us to finish gathering and familiarizing ourselves with existing data to be well prepared to engage the cooperators in developing alternatives.

So I spoke with Will yesterday and, in looking at his calendar, it seems that the only other two opportunities in the immediate future for him to participate in the workshop are during the weeks of January 30 or February 6.

Vanessa and I are aware of Kelly's leave schedule in January and February, and would really like him to participate in the workshop, but if we don't schedule the workshop sometime between January 30 and February 6, Will's next opportunity to participate won't come until the end of March or beginning of April. And that is simply too late and not an option given the NBR Complex CCPs schedule.

So we want to propose to you that, despite Kelly's absence, we hold the alternatives workshop on either from January 30 through February 1, or from February 6 to 8.

Please let Vanessa and I know what you think and what dates would work best.

I'll be out of the office Nov. 20-24, but I'll be back on Nov. 27.

Thank you.

Bernie and Kevin: per our conversation with the NBRC staff on Nov. 6, please distribute this email to the NBRC staff, please let us know which of the two weeks being proposed would work best for all of you.

--

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From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Kelly Hogan
Cc:	Vanessa Fields; Bernie Petersen; McCollister, Matthew; Kevin Shinn
Subject:	Alternatives Workshop scheduling
Date:	Friday, November 17, 2017 3:39:57 PM

Hello Folks,

Vanessa and I have been looking very hard at the alternatives workshop format, possible scheduling options, and necessary preparations to be successful.

We are increasingly concerned that the currently proposed January 11-12 date, being so close to major holidays, might not work for all the members of the Planning Team to prepare well and/or participate in the workshop. Also, we are not sure we can finish gathering and reviewing all the data and information necessary for the workshop, and which normally is gathered during preplanning, before January 11. We feel that it is critical for us to finish gathering and familiarizing ourselves with existing data to be well prepared to engage the cooperators in developing alternatives.

So I spoke with Will yesterday and, in looking at his calendar, it seems that the only other two opportunities in the immediate future for him to participate in the workshop are during the weeks of January 30 or February 6.

Vanessa and I are aware of Kelly's leave schedule in January and February, and would really like him to participate in the workshop, but if we don't schedule the workshop sometime between January 30 and February 6, Will's next opportunity to participate won't come until the end of March or beginning of April. And that is simply too late and not an option given the NBR Complex CCPs schedule.

So we want to propose to you that, despite Kelly's absence, we hold the alternatives workshop on either from January 30 through February 1, or from February 6 to 8.

Please let Vanessa and I know what you think and what dates would work best.

I'll be out of the office Nov. 20-24, but I'll be back on Nov. 27.

Thank you.

Bernie and Kevin: per our conversation with the NBRC staff on Nov. 6, please distribute this email to the NBRC staff, please let us know which of the two weeks being proposed would work best for all of you.

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Lakes, Susan
To: Vanessa Fields
Subject: Question regarding the NBR - CCP meeting....
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 11:49:00 AM

.... just remind me to ask you about something... I'm not going to put it in an email.

Thank you,
Susan Lakes
Budget Specialist

Benton Lake NWR Complex
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406.727.7400 x221 office
406.727.7432 fax

Schedule: M-F 7:30 - 4:00

Approved

Jeff King, Project Leader,
National Bison Range Complex

11/7/2017
Date

Stanley Speaks, Regional Director
Bureau of Indian Affairs – Northwest Regional Office

11/20/2017
Date

Vernon Finley, Chairman
Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes

11-9-17
Date

Neil Anderson, Regional Wildlife Program Manager
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

10/5/17
Date

Gale Decker
Lake County Board of Commissioners
A political subdivision of the State of Montana

11.07.2017
Date

Carol Brooker, Presiding Officer
Sanders County Board of Commissioners
A political subdivision of the State of Montana

Date

From: Fish, Yvonne
To: Bernardo Garza
Subject: MOU, National Bison CCP & EIS
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 9:45:18 AM
Attachments: signature pg MOU.pdf

---

sending original back to you via mail

Yvonne C. Fish ><(((º>`·.¸¸.·´¯`·.¸¸.·´¯`·.¸¸.·><(((º>

Sometimes when things are falling apart, they may actually be falling into place.

–Confidentiality Notice: This e-mail message, including any attachments, is intended only for the person(s) or entity(ies) to which it is addressed and contains information that may be confidential, legally protected, privacy relevant, proprietary in nature or otherwise protected by law from disclosure. If you received this message in error, you are hereby notified that reading, sharing, copying or distributing this message, or its contents, is prohibited. Please telephone or reply to me immediately and delete all copies of the message.

From:	Griffin, Toni
To:	Vanessa Fields; Bernardo Garza
Subject:	Fwd: Nat"l Bison Range CCP
Date:	Monday, November 27, 2017 3:17:07 PM

Toni Griffin
Landscape Architect / Planning Team Leader
NWRS, Region 6, Branch of Refuge Planning
134 Union Blvd.
Lakewood, CO 80228
Ph: 303-236-4378
Telework: Tuesday, Friday

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Kim Crumbo** <crumbo@wildlandsnetwork.org>
Date: Tue, Sep 5, 2017 at 8:19 AM
Subject: Nat'l Bison Range CCP
To: "toni_griffin@fws.gov" <toni_griffin@fws.gov>

Toni,

Please include me on your mailing/alert list for the development of the National Bison Range Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan.

Thank you.

Kim Crumbo
Western Conservation Director
Wildlands Network
928-606-5850
crumbo@wildlandsnetwork.org
wildlandsnetwork.org

From:	Griffin, Toni
To:	Vanessa Fields; Bernardo Garza
Subject:	Fwd: Nat"l Bison Range CCP
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Kim Crumbo
Western Conservation Director
Wildlands Network
928-606-5850
crumbo@wildlandsnetwork.org
wildlandsnetwork.org

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Griffin, Toni
Subject: Re: Nat"l Bison Range CCP
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 3:25:46 PM

Thank you! And this must mean you are back up on email - yeah!

On Mon, Nov 27, 2017 at 3:17 PM, Griffin, Toni <toni_griffin@fws.gov> wrote:

> **Toni Griffin**
> Landscape Architect / Planning Team Leader
> NWRS, Region 6, Branch of Refuge Planning
> 134 Union Blvd.
> Lakewood, CO 80228
> Ph: 303-236-4378
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> crumbo@wildlandsnetwork.org
> wildlandsnetwork.org

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404

406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Griffin, Toni
To: Fields, Vanessa
Subject: Re: Nat"l Bison Range CCP
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 3:30:50 PM

You're most welcome. Yes, I'm back up on email and officially a FWS employee once again. :)

Toni Griffin
Landscape Architect / Planning Team Leader
NWRS, Region 6, Branch of Refuge Planning
134 Union Blvd.
Lakewood, CO 80228
Ph: 303-236-4378
Telework: Tuesday, Friday

On Mon, Nov 27, 2017 at 3:25 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

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>
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> Landscape Architect / Planning Team Leader
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--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Next steps?
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 9:50:42 AM

Hi there-

I am going to try to give you a call in a moment, but I thought if I put my notes in an email it might be helpful. This is the list of things I think we have talked about needing/wanting to get done in the next month or so. Do you have additions or corrections? Shall we talk about how to divide and conquer?

1. Schedule alternatives workshop for sometime late Jan to early-mid Feb.
2. Develop and send out planning update (draft Vision and Goals)
3. Set up regular call with NBR staff (Kelly already in agreement and helping with this)
4. Set up call with Contractors to finalize Administrative Record process (and maybe also talk to them about alternatives workshop and communications/public outreach strategies)
5. Develop overall CCP public involvement/communications plan
6. Develop and sign-off on work plan for CCP with staff
7. Identify needs and prepare for alternatives workshop

One thing I might also add is having a discussion about if maybe we should at least offer to do a briefing for Will/Noreen on the Vision and Goals workshop?

I am going to get a LARGE cup of coffee and give you a call!

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Next steps?
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 9:51:26 AM

Hi there-

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Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Fields, Vanessa
Subject: Re: Next steps?
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 10:01:02 AM

Call me to 303-236-4366

On Wed, Nov 29, 2017 at 9:50 AM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> Hi there-
>
> I am going to try to give you a call in a moment, but I thought if I put my notes in an email it might be helpful. This is the list of things I think we have talked about needing/wanting to get done in the next month or so. Do you have additions or corrections? Shall we talk about how to divide and conquer?
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> Vanessa Fields
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> Division of Science Resources
> 922 Bootlegger Trail
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--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Fields, Vanessa
Subject: Re: Next steps?
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 10:01:06 AM

Call me to 303-236-4366

On Wed, Nov 29, 2017 at 9:50 AM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

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Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Shinn, Kevin
To: Garza, Bernardo
Cc: Kelly Hogan; Vanessa Fields; Bernie Petersen; McCollister, Matthew
Subject: Re: Alternatives Workshop scheduling
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 12:29:08 PM

Bernardo,

Looks like the week of February 6 is it.

On Fri, Nov 17, 2017 at 3:39 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Hello Folks,
>
> Vanessa and I have been looking very hard at the alternatives workshop format, possible scheduling options, and necessary preparations to be successful.
>
> We are increasingly concerned that the currently proposed January 11-12 date, being so close to major holidays, might not work for all the members of the Planning Team to prepare well and/or participate in the workshop. Also, we are not sure we can finish gathering and reviewing all the data and information necessary for the workshop, and which normally is gathered during preplanning, before January 11. We feel that it is critical for us to finish gathering and familiarizing ourselves with existing data to be well prepared to engage the cooperators in developing alternatives.
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Fax (303) 236-4792

--
Kevin J. Shinn
Manager/Federal Wildlife Officer
Lost Trail NWR/NW Montana WMD
406-858-2216 Office
406-260-5192 cell

From:	Shinn, Kevin
To:	Garza, Bernardo
Cc:	Kelly Hogan; Vanessa Fields; Bernie Petersen; McCollister, Matthew
Subject:	Re: Alternatives Workshop scheduling
Date:	Wednesday, November 29, 2017 12:29:09 PM

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--
Kevin J. Shinn
Manager/Federal Wildlife Officer
Lost Trail NWR/NW Montana WMD
406-858-2216 Office
406-260-5192 cell

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Shinn, Kevin
Subject: Re: Alternatives Workshop scheduling
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 12:55:36 PM

Thank you for letting me know Kevin

On Wed, Nov 29, 2017 at 12:29 PM, Shinn, Kevin <kevin_shinn@fws.gov> wrote:

> Bernardo,
>
> Looks like the week of February 6 is it.
>
> On Fri, Nov 17, 2017 at 3:39 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:
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Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
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Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Ryan Moehring
Subject: National Bison Range Complex communication plan
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 2:37:24 PM

Hi Ryan-

We met briefly when I was in the RO in early October - I am co-lead with Bernardo Garza on the National Bison Range Complex CCP. Bernardo and I would like to delve a little deeper into an 'overall' communications plan for this project - looking a the bigger picture and trying to develop a plan for the whole process.

I looked up the decision flow chart and communications plan templates on the EA sharepoint site. These looked like a great starting point, but I am not sure if these are the most current or relevant versions?

I am off the rest of this week, but would you have time next week to chat more about this? Monday and Wednesday afternoon and all day Tuesday are open for me.

Thanks!

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Ryan Moehring
To: Vanessa Fields
Subject: RE: National Bison Range Complex communication plan
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 5:01:45 PM

Hi Vanessa,

Let me touch base with RO leadership on this (to get a better sense of leadership intent and such) and I'll circle back with you soon.

Thanks,
Ryan

Ryan Moehring
Public Affairs
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mountain-Prairie Region
303-236-0345

From: Fields, Vanessa [mailto:vanessa_fields@fws.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 2:37 PM
To: Ryan Moehring
Subject: National Bison Range Complex communication plan

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Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Vanessa Fields
To: Ryan Moehring
Cc: bernardo_garza@fws.gov; kelly_hogan@fws.gov
Subject: Re: National Bison Range Complex communication plan
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2017 6:44:10 AM

Ryan

It seems I might not be aware of the proper channels or protocols for discussing the communication and outreach plan, but Bernardo and I have not had a conversation with leadership about this yet, so if you go to them without us giving them a head's up I am concerned this will cause unnecessary confusion and possible difficulties.

I am out Thursday and Friday, could you please hold off until next week when I am back and I can circle back with the planning team.

Thanks!

Sent from my iPhone

On Nov 29, 2017, at 5:01 PM, Ryan Moehring <ryan_moehring@fws.gov> wrote:

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>
> Let me touch base with RO leadership on this (to get a better sense of leadership intent and such) and I'll circle back with you soon.
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>
> Ryan Moehring
> Public Affairs
> U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
> Mountain-Prairie Region
> 303-236-0345
>
> **From:** Fields, Vanessa [mailto:vanessa_fields@fws.gov]
> **Sent:** Wednesday, November 29, 2017 2:37 PM
> **To:** Ryan Moehring
> **Subject:** National Bison Range Complex communication plan
>
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From: Vanessa Fields
To: Ryan Moehring
Cc: bernardo_garza@fws.gov; kelly_hogan@fws.gov
Subject: Re: National Bison Range Complex communication plan
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2017 6:44:15 AM

Ryan

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I am off the rest of this week, but would you have time next week to chat more about this? Monday and Wednesday afternoon and all day Tuesday are open for me.

Thanks!

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Hogan, Kelly
To: Ryan Moehring
Cc: Bernardo Garza; Vanessa Fields
Subject: Re: National Bison Range Complex communication plan
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2017 6:50:28 AM

Ryan

Give me a call please (4355). Think you may have misread Vanessa's email. She is asking a process question.

Also, empty your mailbox on your phone...lol.

Kelly

On Thu, Nov 30, 2017 at 6:44 AM, Vanessa Fields <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> Ryan
>
> It seems I might not be aware of the proper channels or protocols for discussing the communication and outreach plan, but Bernardo and I have not had a conversation with leadership about this yet, so if you go to them without us giving them a head's up I am concerned this will cause unnecessary confusion and possible difficulties.
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> I am out Thursday and Friday, could you please hold off until next week when I am back and I can circle back with the planning team.
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> Thanks!
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> Sent from my iPhone
>
> On Nov 29, 2017, at 5:01 PM, Ryan Moehring <ryan_moehring@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> > Hi Vanessa,
> >
> > Let me touch base with RO leadership on this (to get a better sense of leadership intent and such) and I'll circle back with you soon.
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> > Thanks,
> >
> > Ryan
> >
> > Ryan Moehring
> >
> > Public Affairs

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Mountain-Prairie Region

303-236-0345

From: Fields, Vanessa [mailto:vanessa_fields@fws.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 2:37 PM
To: Ryan Moehring
Subject: National Bison Range Complex communication plan

Hi Ryan-

We met briefly when I was in the RO in early October - I am co-lead with Bernardo Garza on the National Bison Range Complex CCP. Bernardo and I would like to delve a little deeper into an 'overall' communications plan for this project - looking a the bigger picture and trying to develop a plan for the whole process.

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406-217-6473 (cell)

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Kelly Hogan
Subject:	NBR Timeline
Date:	Thursday, November 30, 2017 8:50:46 AM
Attachments:	NBR CCP timeline_5.3.17.doc

Here it is.

Do you have a scanner at home?

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

National Bison Range Complex

Comprehensive Conservation Plan / EIS / EA

Project Timeline
2017-2020

PURPOSE and NOTES

- Outlines a project schedule for developing a Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for units of the National Bison Range Complex: National Bison Range, Pablo National Wildlife Refuge, Ninepipe National Wildlife Refuge, Lost Trail National Wildlife Refuge and Northwest Montana Wetland Management District.
- Planning effort is divided into the following phases: Preplanning and Scoping; Alternatives Development; Draft CCP/EIS or EA; Final CCP/EIS or EA.

Schedule Milestones	
TASK	**Target Completion Date**
Preplanning and Scoping - Publish Notice of Intent (Week of May 6) - Invitation to State, Tribes, and Cooperating Agencies - Kickoff meeting with Cooperating Agencies (August) - Work Plan - Public Involvement Plan - Scoping Meetings (Week of June 5) - Scoping Report - Vision and Goals Workshop	October 1, 2017
Alternatives Development - Alternatives Development Workshops - Public Input on Draft Alternatives - Briefing Statements to Regional and National Directorate	March 1, 2018
Development of Draft CCP/EIS/EA - Objectives and Strategies Development Workshop - Environmental Analysis - Internal Review Draft CCP/EIS/EA - Meet with Cooperating Agencies; respond to comments - Notice of Availability; briefing statements - Public Review of Draft CCP/EIS/EA - Public Meetings	March 1, 2019
Development of Final CCP/EIS - Respond to Public Comments - Internal Review Final CCP/EIS - Notice of Availability; briefing statements - Publication of Final CCP/EIS; 30-day waiting period - Draft Record of Decision - Final Record of Decision - Notice of Availability of ROD - Printing of Final stand-alone CCPs - Completion of Administrative Record	May 1, 2020

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Will Meeks
Bcc:	vanessa_fields@fws.gov
Subject:	NBR Complex CCP"s Alternatives Workshop
Date:	Friday, December 1, 2017 1:28:21 PM

Will,

Vanessa and I took a look at your calendar and we believe we could schedule the NBR Complex CCPs Management Alternatives workshop during the week of February 5, 2018, when your schedule shows you have some availability.

The workshop will last between two and half to three days. If possible, we would like to start on Tuesday, Feb 6 and end on Thursday, Feb. 8. In order to develop a more specific schedule we need to know if you want to participate in the entire workshop or only in part of it.

Thanks.

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

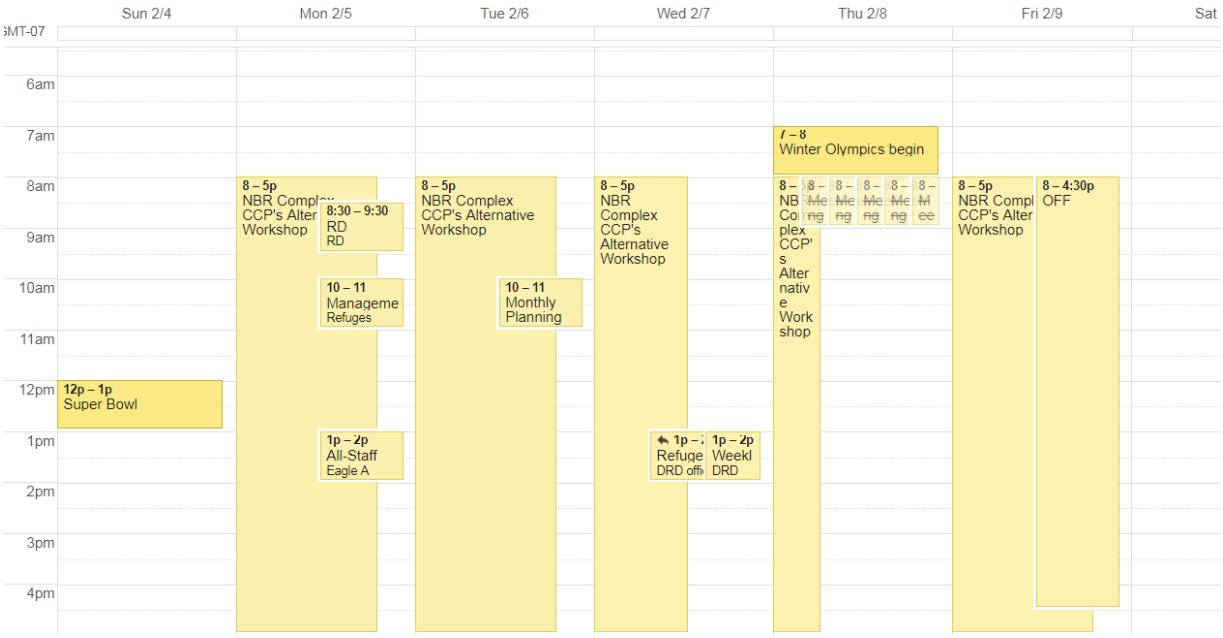
From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Vanessa Fields
Subject: Fwd: NBR Complex CCP's Alternatives Workshop
Date: Friday, December 1, 2017 3:06:54 PM
Attachments: image.png

Hi Vanessa,

FYI.

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Matten, Betsy** <betsy_matten@fws.gov>
Date: Fri, Dec 1, 2017 at 2:53 PM
Subject: Re: NBR Complex CCP's Alternatives Workshop
To: "Garza, Bernardo" <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>

Bernardo,
It's on his calendar.
Betsy



On Fri, Dec 1, 2017 at 2:37 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Betsy,
>
> Could you please block Will's schedule for the week of Feb. 5, 2018?
>
> My communications with Will are below.
>
> Thank you
>
> ---------- Forwarded message ----------
> From: **Will Meeks** <will_meeks@fws.gov>
> Date: Fri, Dec 1, 2017 at 2:33 PM
> Subject: Re: NBR Complex CCP's Alternatives Workshop
> To: "Garza, Bernardo" <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>
>
> At this point. All of it. Can you ask Betsy to block it off? Thanks.
>
> Will Meeks
> U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
> Mountain-Prairie Region
> Assistant Regional Director
> National Wildlife Refuge System
> 303-236-4303(w)
> 720-541-0310 (c)
>
> On Dec 1, 2017, at 1:28 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:
>
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> >
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> >
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> > **Bernardo Garza**
> > **Planning Team Leader**
> > **Branch of Planning and Policy**
> > **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region**
> > **Office (303) 236-4377**

Fax (303) 236-4792

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Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
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--
Betsy M. Matten, Administrative Officer
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 6
National Wildlife Refuge System
134 Union Blvd.
Lakewood, CO 80228
303-236-4307
Betsy_Matten@fws.gov

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Robert Mansheim
Subject: Bison Range website
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2017 8:12:51 AM

HI Robert-

Thank you so much for updating the planning website to show that the plan for the National Bison Range Complex is 'in progress' and making it a live link to the dedicated page for that plan. Awesome!!

It is a minor detail, but would it be possible to update the map on that same page (https://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/refuges/mt_Plan.php) so that the icon also reflects that it is 'in progress'? We have a very high level of interest from the public in this process and anything we can do to reduce confusion is very helpful.

Thanks!

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Kelly Hogan
Cc: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Catching up
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2017 8:47:28 AM

Kelly-

Hope you made it to Montana without trouble and are settling in at the Bison Range.

Just wanted to touch base on a couple of things-

Did you end up talking to Ryan Moerhing last week?

Have you a chance yet to consider when would be a good time to schedule a regular standing CCP meeting with the staff? i.e. their regular staff meeting, our regular staff meeting or a separate time?

What is the best number to reach you at while you up here?

Thanks and stay warm!!

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Hogan, Kelly
To: Fields, Vanessa
Cc: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: Catching up
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2017 9:07:30 AM

Morning Vanessa and Bernardo.

Answers below.

On Tue, Dec 5, 2017 at 8:47 AM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> Kelly-
>
> Hope you made it to Montana without trouble and are settling in at the Bison Range. I did, Thanks. Plane was delayed about 2 hrs but no snow so travel was fine.
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> Just wanted to touch base on a couple of things-
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> Have you a chance yet to consider when would be a good time to schedule a regular standing CCP meeting with the staff? i.e. their regular staff meeting, our regular staff meeting or a separate time? Yes, Bernie has set up Staff meetings for 9 am on Mondays (how convenient). Use the same number that we use for the planning team call. Maybe we do one joint call each month but we can talk more on Monday.
>
> What is the best number to reach you at while you up here? 406-644-2211, ext 203.
>
> Thanks and stay warm!! Will try.
>
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> Vanessa Fields
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> 922 Bootlegger Trail
> Great Falls, MT 59404
> 406-727-7400 x219
> 406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: comms plan
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2017 9:42:25 AM

Hi Bernardo-

Just had a quick chat with Ryan - he would like to be cautious (based on previous experience) and not get out ahead of leadership (Will/Mo) on a communications plan for NBRC. We agreed that in a perfect world, we would schedule a call with you, me, him, project leader and Will and/or Mo to make sure we are all on the same page with our intentions. He is going to try to catch Will and we can try to bring it up with Mo tomorrow when we have her and see if we can schedule something. If not, he and I agreed if we sense we can just get a green light from either of them to go ahead and develop a draft of something, we should just seize the moment and not worry about scheduling an additional call with everyone.

Does that sound ok to you?

--
Vanessa Fields
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Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
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406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Fields, Vanessa
Subject:	Re: comms plan
Date:	Tuesday, December 5, 2017 9:51:17 AM

Absolutely. Thanks for contacting Ryan

On Tue, Dec 5, 2017 at 9:42 AM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> Hi Bernardo-
>
> Just had a quick chat with Ryan - he would like to be cautious (based on previous experience) and not get out ahead of leadership (Will/Mo) on a communications plan for NBRC. We agreed that in a perfect world, we would schedule a call with you, me, him, project leader and Will and/or Mo to make sure we are all on the same page with our intentions. He is going to try to catch Will and we can try to bring it up with Mo tomorrow when we have her and see if we can schedule something. If not, he and I agreed if we sense we can just get a green light from either of them to go ahead and develop a draft of something, we should just seize the moment and not worry about scheduling an additional call with everyone.
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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
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From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Hogan, Kelly
Cc: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: Catching up
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2017 11:29:51 AM

Kelly-

Thanks for the updates! I touched base with Ryan - we are on the same page now. In short, I understand better what Ryan wants to do with touching base with Will or Mo before we move ahead on even a draft of anything, so we are going to try to get that done in this week. Based on that input, we will know better where to go with this. There is a small chance there will be a conference call to discuss this, if that happens we will loop you in. Otherwise, if you have any questions or concerns, let us know. We can definitely circle back on this during the staff call next week.

Bernardo and I will chat with the planning staff to see how we can adjust our staff meeting so that he and I can make the NBRC call - we will plan to be on the call next Monday, and as you said, figure out from there what works, how often, etc.

Thanks!

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From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Hogan, Kelly
Cc: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: Catching up
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2017 2:46:03 PM

Kelly-

Maureen is planning to start attending our Monday morning planning calls and next Monday she wants to talk more about the Secretarial order 3355, so Bernardo and I don't think we should miss that conversation. How long do the NBR staff meetings usually go? Could we call in at 10am instead next week?

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Subject: Re: Catching up
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2017 2:46:46 PM

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From: Hogan, Kelly
To: Fields, Vanessa
Cc: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: Catching up
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2017 4:34:11 PM

Don't worry about it. We will start up after the Holidays. Several folks will not be around next week.
K

On Wed, Dec 6, 2017 at 2:46 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> Kelly-
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From: Hogan, Kelly
To: Fields, Vanessa
Cc: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: Catching up
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2017 4:34:12 PM

Don't worry about it. We will start up after the Holidays. Several folks will not be around next week.
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On Wed, Dec 6, 2017 at 2:46 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

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From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Hogan, Kelly
Cc: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: Catching up
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2017 7:48:29 AM

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To: Hogan, Kelly
Cc: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: Catching up
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2017 7:49:13 AM

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From: Hogan, Kelly
To: Fields, Vanessa
Cc: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: Catching up
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2017 8:05:29 AM

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From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Garza, Bernardo; Toni Griffin; Linda Moeder; Matthew McCollister
Subject: Weekly staff meeting
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2017 8:26:02 AM

Hi planning team!

I wanted to circle back on the conversation we didn't get to finish yesterday about possibly adjusting our staff meeting so that Bernardo and I can set up a regular coordination call with the NBR staff.

What we are trying to do is set up a regular coordination call with the NBR staff for the CCP. That is about all we know right now, all of the details are completely negotiable. Kelly had suggested that we call into the weekly NBR staff call - that is clearly the easiest thing for them, but unfortunately, their call is at 9am Monday mornings. We have not discussed this with staff, but we were thinking this coordination call would probably be once a month (if we need more, we can schedule those as needed).

So I thought I would throw out some ideas. I figure we can talk more about it on our call on Monday morning, but I wanted to give you a little time to think about it beforehand.

Option 1. We really don't want to disrupt/affect our planning staff call and Bernardo and I should work with NBR to find another time that does not conflict (this is completely fine and if this is how you feel, please say so).

Option 2. We change our planning call to a later time - say 10am on Mondays (either just once a month, or for every call, whichever is easier).

Option 3. We keep our call at 9am and once a month the first part of the call is focused on NBR and all of planning joins all of the NBR staff. We could make an agreement that we will cut the NBR conversation off at 30min and schedule a separate call if there is unfinished business. This could be good too if Mo is joining us so that the staff have some time for direct interaction with her too.

Or other options??

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From: Griffin, Toni
To: Fields, Vanessa
Cc: Garza, Bernardo; Linda Moeder; Matthew McCollister
Subject: Re: Weekly staff meeting
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2017 10:55:19 AM

Hi Vanessa,

Thanks for ideas to consider. I think all the options are viable and am happy to discuss them at our meeting Monday.

My first reaction is I like option 3 (maybe cuz i'm a creature of habitat). Also, I'm interested in the NBR process and this sounds like a good opportunity to stay up to date and bounce ideas off each other.

Have a nice day,
Toni

Toni Griffin
Landscape Architect / Planning Team Leader
NWRS, Region 6, Branch of Refuge Planning
134 Union Blvd.
Lakewood, CO 80228
Ph: 303-236-4378
Telework: Tuesday, Friday

On Thu, Dec 7, 2017 at 8:25 AM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> Hi planning team!
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From: Moeder, Linda
To: Griffin, Toni
Cc: Fields, Vanessa; Garza, Bernardo; Matthew McCollister
Subject: Re: Weekly staff meeting
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2017 1:55:11 PM

Vanessa,
I agree with Toni I like option #3 as well. My only thought is how will the NBR staff feel meeting with all of planning and Maureen when she can?
I can't foresee any tangible objections but my general view is from the RO outward.

Linda Moeder
R6, Regional Realty Cartographer,
134 Union Blvd., Suite 300
Lakewood, CO 80228
Office: 303.236.4384
Fax: 303.236.4792
Linda_Moeder@fws.gov

"Keep your eyes on the road, your hands upon the wheel"
- Jim Morrison

On Thu, Dec 7, 2017 at 10:55 AM, Griffin, Toni <toni_griffin@fws.gov> wrote:

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> Thanks for ideas to consider. I think all the options are viable and am happy to discuss them at our meeting Monday.
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So I thought I would throw out some ideas. I figure we can talk more about it on our call on Monday morning, but I wanted to give you a little time to think about it beforehand.

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Option 3. We keep our call at 9am and once a month the first part of the call is focused on NBR and all of planning joins all of the NBR staff. We could make an agreement that we will cut the NBR conversation off at 30min and schedule a separate call if there is unfinished business. This could be good too if Mo is joining us so that the staff have some time for direct interaction with her too.

Or other options??

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Bernie Petersen; Vanessa Fields
Subject: Fwd: old CCP information from NBR
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2017 2:38:37 PM

Awesome.

Thank you Bernie.

I'll copy the files to the planning drive, under NBR CCP

Hope you are doing well.

Bernardo

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Bernie Petersen** <bernie_petersen@fws.gov>
Date: Thu, Dec 7, 2017 at 2:02 PM
Subject: old CCP information from NBR
To: Bernardo Garza <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>

I put the files on the I drive under my name titles Old CCP NBR

Bernard J Petersen

Refuge Supervisor for Colorado,Montana, Utah, Wyoming

US Fish and Wildlife Service Region 6

National Wildlife Refuge System

303-236-4310 W

720-708-8026 Cell

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377

Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: old CCP information from NBR
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2017 2:50:36 PM

Yeah! Thanks for wrangling that!!

On Thu, Dec 7, 2017 at 2:38 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Awesome.
>
> Thank you Bernie.
>
> I'll copy the files to the planning drive, under NBR CCP
>
> Hope you are doing well.
>
> Bernardo
>
> ---------- Forwarded message ----------
> From: **Bernie Petersen** <bernie_petersen@fws.gov>
> Date: Thu, Dec 7, 2017 at 2:02 PM
> Subject: old CCP information from NBR
> To: Bernardo Garza <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>
>
> I put the files on the I drive under my name titles Old CCP NBR
>
> Bernard J Petersen
>
> Refuge Supervisor for Colorado,Montana, Utah, Wyoming
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> --
> **Bernardo Garza**
> **Planning Team Leader**

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--
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Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
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406-217-6473 (cell)

From:	Fields, Vanessa
To:	Moeder, Linda
Cc:	Griffin, Toni; Garza, Bernardo; Matthew McCollister
Subject:	Re: Weekly staff meeting
Date:	Thursday, December 7, 2017 3:25:30 PM

Linda-

Good question - Bernardo and I are going to be talking to Kelly soon - we can get his take on that and/or ask him to check in with the staff to get their perspective.

On Thu, Dec 7, 2017 at 1:54 PM, Moeder, Linda <linda_moeder@fws.gov> wrote:

> Vanessa,
> I agree with Toni I like option #3 as well. My only thought is how will the NBR staff feel meeting with all of planning and Maureen when she can?
> I can't foresee any tangible objections but my general view is from the RO outward.
>
> ***Linda Moeder***
> R6, Regional Realty Cartographer,
> 134 Union Blvd., Suite 300
> Lakewood, CO 80228
> Office: 303.236.4384
> Fax: 303.236.4792
> *Linda_Moeder@fws.gov*
>
> *"Keep your eyes on the road, your hands upon the wheel"*
> *- Jim Morrison*

On Thu, Dec 7, 2017 at 10:55 AM, Griffin, Toni <toni_griffin@fws.gov> wrote:

> Hi Vanessa,
>
> Thanks for ideas to consider. I think all the options are viable and am happy to discuss them at our meeting Monday.
>
> My first reaction is I like option 3 (maybe cuz i'm a creature of habitat). Also, I'm interested in the NBR process and this sounds like a good opportunity to stay up to date and bounce ideas off each other.
>
> Have a nice day,
> Toni
>
> **Toni Griffin**
> Landscape Architect / Planning Team Leader
> NWRS, Region 6, Branch of Refuge Planning
> 134 Union Blvd.
> Lakewood, CO 80228

Ph: 303-236-4378
Telework: Tuesday, Friday

On Thu, Dec 7, 2017 at 8:25 AM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> Hi planning team!
>
> I wanted to circle back on the conversation we didn't get to finish yesterday about possibly adjusting our staff meeting so that Bernardo and I can set up a regular coordination call with the NBR staff.
>
> What we are trying to do is set up a regular coordination call with the NBR staff for the CCP. That is about all we know right now, all of the details are completely negotiable. Kelly had suggested that we call into the weekly NBR staff call - that is clearly the easiest thing for them, but unfortunately, their call is at 9am Monday mornings. We have not discussed this with staff, but we were thinking this coordination call would probably be once a month (if we need more, we can schedule those as needed).
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>
> Or other options??
>
> --
> Vanessa Fields
> Invasive Species Ecologist
> Division of Science Resources
> 922 Bootlegger Trail
> Great Falls, MT 59404
> 406-727-7400 x219
> 406-217-6473 (cell)

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
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Great Falls, MT 59404
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From:	Fields, Vanessa
To:	Brent Woodger; Marlin McDonald; Mike Koole; Amy Lisk; Bernardo Garza; Beverly Skinner; Darren Thomas; Dean Vaughan; Karen Shoemaker; Kelly Hogan; Kevin Shinn; Matthew McCollister
Bcc:	Vanessa Fields
Subject:	Notes: NBRC CCP Staff Coordination Call 12/11
Date:	Monday, December 11, 2017 12:21:11 PM
Attachments:	Request_NBR_PEER.pdf

Hello Bison Range Complex CCP Team!

Bernardo and I joined Kelly and the available NBRC staff this morning for a call to kick-off a regular monthly CCP coordination call. We apologize if this was short notice and we missed some of you this time, but we will hopefully catch everyone moving forward.

We had a brief discussion on how and when to hold this call - the consensus was to have a CCP coordination call during the first NBRC staff meeting of the month. The planning staff will call in, we will limit the CCP discussion to no more than the first 30 minutes, and then schedule any follow up calls we may need for the month if more discussion on a topic is needed. If you have any questions or concerns about this plan, please let Kelly know and he can pass it along to Bernardo and I and we will find another solution.

We wanted to provide a summary of today's discussion and the list of action items:

1. Alternatives Development
The alternatives workshop is scheduled for the **week of February 6th**. It will likely be at the Red Lion in Polson again. Bernardo and I are meeting with the contractors who are assisting us with this workshop on Thursday (12/14). After that call we will have a better idea of the agenda and more information. Also, Will Meeks has expressed his intention to be there for all of the workshop.

We need to gather and organize information before this workshop so that we are well prepared going into it. We discussed a number of action items to start to move this way:

-Vanessa will set up a location on the google drive where we can begin to coordinate and share relevant documents for the Alternatives Development by Monday COB
-Vanessa and Bernardo will provide staff with some preliminary guidance on what materials we need for Alternatives development by COB Wednesday
-Bernardo will post on the google drive the NBRC documents that Bernie has already shared for Alternatives Development by COB Wednesday
-Amy and Bev are meeting on Thursday to begin to begin organizing and identifying gaps in biological information for the Alternatives workshop
-Vanessa will do a search on ServCat to see what documents are available. I will also search the Benton Lake server for relevant documents from the Benton Lake Complex CCP process that included Lost Trail and the Flathead County WPAs by COB Wednesday.

2. Communications Plan
Vanessa and Bernardo are going to work with Ryan Moerhing from External Affairs on further developing the Communications Plan that was started with the Notice of Intent. Our intention is to look at the overall CCP process and develop a proactive communication strategy. As we get something developed, we will get staff input and ultimately, of course, Will and Mo will need to approve it (estimated completion: January).

3. Vision and Goals
We have received some follow-up comments from our cooperating agencies on the summary scoping report, but no requests for changes to the Vision and Goals. We will circle back to fine-tuning/editing/wordsmithing the Vision and Goals as we prepare the draft CCP.

4. Other happenings
The Service received a FOIA from PEER on October 20th (see attached). The response has been handled and provided through the RO. The CSKT requested consultation with the Service on changes to staffing at the NBRC, the R6 realignment plan and the CCP. Kelly is working with Will and Mo on this.

We will have the next monthly coordination call during the NBRC staff meeting at 9am on January 8th. I will send out a google calendar invite for this.

If you have questions/comments/corrections on any of this, please let us know! Also, if I forgot anyone on this email list, please let me know so I can correct that ASAP!

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
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Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
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Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility

962 Wayne Avenue • Suite 610 • Silver Spring, MD 20910 • 202-265-PEER(7337) • fax: 202-265-4192
e-mail: info@peer.org • website: www.peer.org

October 20, 2017

Stacey Cummins
FOIA Coordinator
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 6
P.O. Box 25486
Denver Federal Center
Denver, CO 80225
fw6_foia@fws.gov

RE: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA) REQUEST
VIA U.S. MAIL & EMAIL

Dear Ms. Cummins:

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552, as amended, Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER) requests documents related to communications with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT). Specifically, we request the following:

> All documents, correspondence and communications, or notes reflecting or discussing communications:
>
> Between any employee or officer of Region 6 of the Fish and Wildlife Service and any person representing, or acting or speaking on behalf of the CSKT, between March 1, 2017 and the present.

This request includes all documents that have ever been within your custody or control, whether they exist in agency "working," investigative, retired, electronic mail, or other files currently or at any other time.

In a January 21, 2009 memo, President Barack Obama declared the following policy for the Executive Branch:

> "The Freedom of Information Act should be administered with a clear presumption: In the face of doubt, openness prevails. The Government should not keep information confidential merely because public officials might be embarrassed by disclosure, because errors and failures might be revealed, or because of speculative or abstract fears. Nondisclosure should never be based on an effort to protect the personal interests of Government officials at the expense of those they are supposed to serve... All agencies should adopt a presumption in favor of disclosure, in order to renew their commitment to the principles

embodied in FOIA, and to usher in a new era of open Government. The presumption of disclosure should be applied to all decisions involving FOIA."

For any documents or portions of documents that you block release due to specific exemption(s) from the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act, please provide an index itemizing and describing the documents or portions of documents withheld. The index should, pursuant to the holding of Vaughn v. Rosen, 484 F.2d 820 (D.C. Cir. 1973), provide a detailed justification for claiming a particular exemption that explains why each such exemption applies to the document or portion of a document withheld.

PEER requests that all fees be waived because "disclosure of the information is in the public interest . . . and is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requestor" (5 U.S.C. 552 (a) (4)(A)):

1. The records concern the operations or activities of the Government.
The FOIA request is, by its terms, limited to identifiable activities of the USFWS concerning relationships or communications with an Indian Tribe.

2. The disclosure of the requested records is likely to contribute to public understanding of these operations or activities.
The requested material concerns the management of the Fish and Wildlife Service in relation to relationships and communications with the CSKT. The CSKT has been actively involved with the Fish and Wildlife Service, in particular concerning annual funding agreements for the National Bison Range Complex and a possible transfer of the National Bison Range to the Tribe. Therefore, communications between the CSKT and the FWS are of great public interest.

3. The release of these requested records will contribute significantly to public understanding of the governmental activities.
The information requested should shed direct light on the relationship between the CSKT and Region 6 of the FWS, and how it may have affected policies and actions of the FWS.

While a certain segment of the population has an interest in these communications in particular, the broader public has a keen interest in being assured that relationships between tribal representatives and FWS staff are appropriate and serve the interests of the Service and the American people.

PEER intends to provide the requested information to the general public though —

- Release to the news media;

- Posting on the PEER web page which draws between 1,000 and 10,000 viewers per day; and

- Publication in PEER's newsletter that has a circulation of approximately 20,000, including 1,500 environmental journalists.

Through these methods, PEER generates an average of 1.5 mainstream news articles per day. Moreover, PEER has repeatedly demonstrated the ability to generate nationwide news coverage concerning activities occurring within the USFWS as well as the evolution of a succession of failed AFA agreements on the National Bison Range.

4. Disclosure would not serve a commercial interest of the requestor.
Disclosure is in no way connected with any commercial interest of the requestors in that PEER is a nonprofit, nonpartisan public interest organization concerned with upholding the public trust through responsible management of our nation's resources and with supporting professional integrity within public land management and pollution control agencies. To that end, PEER is designated as a tax-exempt organization under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue code.

If you have any questions about this FOIA request, please contact me at (202) 265-PEER (7337). I look forward to receiving the agencies final response within 20 working days.

Cordially,

Paula Dinerstein

Paula Dinerstein
Senior Counsel

From: Skinner, Beverly
To: Fields, Vanessa
Subject: Re: Notes: NBRC CCP Staff Coordination Call 12/11
Date: Monday, December 11, 2017 1:09:20 PM

It is good to have you on board! thanks

Really looking forward to working with you over the next year and a half or next 3 years whichever it turns out to be.

On Mon, Dec 11, 2017 at 12:21 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

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>
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406-217-6473 (cell)

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Beverly Roedner Skinner
beverly_skinner@fws.gov
Wildlife Biologist
Lost Trail National Wildlife Refuge
6295 Pleasant Valley Road
Marion, Montana 59925
406-858- 2286
406-858-2218 (fax)

Visit our new websites at http://www.fws.gov/refuge/lost_trail/
http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Northwest_Montana_Flathead_County_WMD/

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Skinner, Beverly
Subject: Re: Notes: NBRC CCP Staff Coordination Call 12/11
Date: Monday, December 11, 2017 1:27:21 PM

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likewise- really looking forward to working with you too! It's probably going to be a bit of a wild ride :)

On Mon, Dec 11, 2017 at 1:09 PM, Skinner, Beverly <beverly_skinner@fws.gov> wrote:

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>
> Visit our new websites at http://www.fws.gov/refuge/lost_trail/
> http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Northwest_Montana_Flathead_County_WMD/

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Amy Lisk
Subject: Darren"s email
Date: Monday, December 11, 2017 1:28:45 PM

Hey there-

thanks for all of your input on the call today!

I tried to include Darren on the email with the notes from the call.....but I couldn't find him in the directory so I just typed it in manually and it bounced back to me....can you help?

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Google Calendar on behalf of Vanessa Fields
To: bernardo_garza@fws.gov; matthew_mccollister@fws.gov; marlin_mcdonald@fws.gov; beverly_skinner@fws.gov; karen_shoemaker@fws.gov; amy_lisk@fws.gov; mike_koole@fws.gov; brent_woodger@fws.gov; kevin_shinn@fws.gov; dean_vaughan@fws.gov
Subject: NBRC CCP Alternatives Workshop
Start: Wednesday, March 7, 2018 12:00:00 AM
End: Saturday, March 10, 2018 12:00:00 AM
Location: Red Lion Inn, Polson, MT
Attachments: invite.ics

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more details » <https://www.google.com/calendar/event?
action=VIEW&eid=MmkwdjNzb2JxaXBsb3E1a292Ym05cmNoZG4gYmVybmFyZG9fZ2FyemFAZndzLmdvdg&tok=MjIjdmFuZXNzYV9maWVsZHNAZndzLmdvdjNjNWI0YTIyM2Y3YTFkNjljYTViNzQ5NGJiNGM5N2E2MGYwOTY0YmQ&ctz=America/Denver&hl=en>

NBRC CCP Alternatives Workshop

We will have the Alternatives Workshop for the National Bison Range Complex CCP during these three days. Agenda, with specific times and details, will be forthcoming soon.
When
Tue Feb 6 – Thu Feb 8, 2018
Where
Red Lion Inn, Polson, MT (map <https://maps.google.com/maps?q=Red+Lion+Inn,+Polson,+MT&hl=en>)
Video call
https://plus.google.com/hangouts/_/doi.gov/vanessa-fields <https://plus.google.com/hangouts/_/doi.gov/vanessa-fields?hceid=dmFuZXNzYV9maWVsZHNAZndzLmdvdg.2i0v3sobqiploq5kovbm9rchdn>
Calendar
bernardo_garza@fws.gov
Who
• vanessa_fields@fws.gov
- organizer
• matthew_mccollister@fws.gov
• marlin_mcdonald@fws.gov
• beverly_skinner@fws.gov
• karen_shoemaker@fws.gov
• bernardo_garza@fws.gov
• amy_lisk@fws.gov
• mike_koole@fws.gov
• brent_woodger@fws.gov
• kevin_shinn@fws.gov
• dean_vaughan@fws.gov

Going?
Yes <https://www.google.com/calendar/event?
action=RESPOND&eid=MmkwdjNzb2JxaXBsb3E1a292Ym05cmNoZG4gYmVybmFyZG9fZ2FyemFAZndzLmdvdg&rst=1&tok=MjIjdmFuZXNzYV9maWVsZHNAZndzLmdvdjNjNWI0YTIyM2Y3YTFkNjljYTViNzQ5NGJiNGM5N2E2MGYwOTY0YmQ&ctz=America/Denver&hl=en>
-
Maybe <https://www.google.com/calendar/event?
action=RESPOND&eid=MmkwdjNzb2JxaXBsb3E1a292Ym05cmNoZG4gYmVybmFyZG9fZ2FyemFAZndzLmdvdg&rst=3&tok=MjIjdmFuZXNzYV9maWVsZHNAZndzLmdvdjNjNWI0YTIyM2Y3YTFkNjljYTViNzQ5NGJiNGM5N2E2MGYwOTY0YmQ&ctz=America/Denver&hl=en>
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No <https://www.google.com/calendar/event?
action=RESPOND&eid=MmkwdjNzb2JxaXBsb3E1a292Ym05cmNoZG4gYmVybmFyZG9fZ2FyemFAZndzLmdvdg&rst=2&tok=MjIjdmFuZXNzYV9maWVsZHNAZndzLmdvdjNjNWI0YTIyM2Y3YTFkNjljYTViNzQ5NGJiNGM5N2E2MGYwOTY0YmQ&ctz=America/Denver&hl=en>
more options » <https://www.google.com/calendar/event?
action=VIEW&eid=MmkwdjNzb2JxaXBsb3E1a292Ym05cmNoZG4gYmVybmFyZG9fZ2FyemFAZndzLmdvdg&tok=MjIjdmFuZXNzYV9maWVsZHNAZndzLmdvdjNjNWI0YTIyM2Y3YTFkNjljYTViNzQ5NGJiNGM5N2E2MGYwOTY0YmQ&ctz=America/Denver&hl=en>

Invitation from Google Calendar <https://www.google.com/calendar/>

You are receiving this email at the account bernardo_garza@fws.gov because you are subscribed for invitations on calendar bernardo_garza@fws.gov.

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Forwarding this invitation could allow any recipient to modify your RSVP response. Learn More <https://support.google.com/calendar/answer/37135#forwarding> .

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Bernardo Garza; Beverly Skinner; Amy Lisk
Subject: BNL CCP docs/info
Date: Monday, December 11, 2017 4:36:57 PM

Hey there-

I searched through our records on my computer and the BNL server for relevant stuff from that CCP process - didn't find as much as I had hoped. I did put what I found on the google drive under:

NBRC CCP\Previous Planning Efforts\BNL CCP and LTR HMP draft 2011

I can still follow up with Toni to see if she stashed anything...but I have a feeling she may have passed it on to Laura?

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Skinner, Beverly
To: Fields, Vanessa; Amy Lisk
Subject: Re: BNL CCP docs/info
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2017 8:32:30 AM

---

thanks - will check it out

I still have the draft documents for CMR. I am just now looking at the alternatives we came up with to remind myself about this portion of the process. I still plan to drive down to the Bison Range on Thursday so Amy and I can work through some ideas. I do not know if Kevin plans to come too - he said he had something personal on that day and wasn't working.

I am going to copy the alternative pages and send to Amy today. That way we are on the same page when we sit down and discuss on Thursday.

Do you have another set of examples we can look at also? Maybe Benton Lake?

Also - will the alternatives be the same for both the EIS and the EA? If so - at what point do we stop combining these two documents and start working on them as separate documents? And should we be thinking of separate alternatives for the EA "refuges" versus the "Wetland Districts" since they are different types of lands with different purposes?

On Mon, Dec 11, 2017 at 4:36 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> Hey there-
>
> I searched through our records on my computer and the BNL server for relevant stuff from that CCP process - didn't find as much as I had hoped. I did put what I found on the google drive under:
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> Division of Science Resources
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--
Beverly Roedner Skinner
beverly_skinner@fws.gov
Wildlife Biologist

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6295 Pleasant Valley Road
Marion, Montana 59925
406-858- 2286
406-858-2218 (fax)

Visit our new websites at http://www.fws.gov/refuge/lost_trail/
http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Northwest_Montana_Flathead_County_WMD/

From: Skinner, Beverly
To: Fields, Vanessa
Subject: Re: BNL CCP docs/info
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2017 8:43:23 AM

I had no idea there were some HMP's started for Lost Trail. Great info - thanks.

On Mon, Dec 11, 2017 at 4:36 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> Hey there-
>
> I searched through our records on my computer and the BNL server for relevant stuff from that CCP process - didn't find as much as I had hoped. I did put what I found on the google drive under:
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From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Skinner, Beverly
Cc: Amy Lisk
Subject: Re: BNL CCP docs/info
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2017 8:47:50 AM

Bernardo and I are going to get together at 10am today and pull together answers to your questions and overall preliminary guidance to developing alternatives - stay tuned! :)

Are just you and Amy getting together on Thursday to go over biological information or are other staff going to be joining you to consider other topics?

On Tue, Dec 12, 2017 at 8:32 AM, Skinner, Beverly <beverly_skinner@fws.gov> wrote:

> thanks - will check it out
>
> I still have the draft documents for CMR. I am just now looking at the alternatives we came up with to remind myself about this portion of the process. I still plan to drive down to the Bison Range on Thursday so Amy and I can work through some ideas. I do not know if Kevin plans to come too - he said he had something personal on that day and wasn't working.
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> Also - will the alternatives be the same for both the EIS and the EA? If so - at what point do we stop combining these two documents and start working on them as separate documents? And should we be thinking of separate alternatives for the EA "refuges" versus the "Wetland Districts" since they are different types of lands with different purposes?
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--
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406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Bernardo Garza
Subject: Fwd: BNL CCP docs/info
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2017 9:02:54 AM

FYI - meant to cc you on my response and hit send too quickly!
---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Fields, Vanessa** <vanessa_fields@fws.gov>
Date: Tue, Dec 12, 2017 at 8:47 AM
Subject: Re: BNL CCP docs/info
To: "Skinner, Beverly" <beverly_skinner@fws.gov>
Cc: Amy Lisk <amy_lisk@fws.gov>

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On Tue, Dec 12, 2017 at 8:32 AM, Skinner, Beverly <beverly_skinner@fws.gov> wrote:

> thanks - will check it out
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> I still have the draft documents for CMR. I am just now looking at the alternatives we came up with to remind myself about this portion of the process. I still plan to drive down to the Bison Range on Thursday so Amy and I can work through some ideas. I do not know if Kevin plans to come too - he said he had something personal on that day and wasn't working.
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> Visit our new websites at http://www.fws.gov/refuge/lost_trail/
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From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Bernardo Garza
Subject: Fwd: BNL CCP docs/info
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2017 9:03:38 AM

FYI - meant to cc you on my response and hit send too quickly!
---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Fields, Vanessa** <vanessa_fields@fws.gov>
Date: Tue, Dec 12, 2017 at 8:47 AM
Subject: Re: BNL CCP docs/info
To: "Skinner, Beverly" <beverly_skinner@fws.gov>
Cc: Amy Lisk <amy_lisk@fws.gov>

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Are just you and Amy getting together on Thursday to go over biological information or are other staff going to be joining you to consider other topics?

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>
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--
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Division of Science Resources
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From: Lisk, Amy
To: Fields, Vanessa
Subject: Re: Darren"s email
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2017 10:57:08 AM

Hi!

Thanks for your input too... I really wish we had been given more time in the pre-planning but it is what it is and I'll do my best to come up with something!

I will try to keep Darren posted. He doesn't check email and so it gets deactivated regularly. Usually someone just prints out whatever needs to be shared.

A:)

On Mon, Dec 11, 2017 at 1:28 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> Hey there-
>
> thanks for all of your input on the call today!
>
> I tried to include Darren on the email with the notes from the call.....but I couldn't find him in the directory so I just typed it in manually and it bounced back to me....can you help?
>
> --
> Vanessa Fields
> Invasive Species Ecologist
> Division of Science Resources
> 922 Bootlegger Trail
> Great Falls, MT 59404
> 406-727-7400 x219
> 406-217-6473 (cell)

--
Amy Lisk

Wildlife Biologist
National Bison Range Complex
US Fish and Wildlife Service

58355 Bison Range Road
Moiese, MT 59824
406-644-2211 x 217
Fax: 406-644-2661
amy_lisk@fws.gov

Visit our new website at http://www.fws.gov/refuge/national_bison_range/
AND check out the National Bison Range on Facebook!!

From:	Fields, Vanessa
To:	Bernardo Garza
Subject:	Fwd: Darren"s email
Date:	Tuesday, December 12, 2017 11:07:41 AM

FYI
---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Lisk, Amy** <amy_lisk@fws.gov>
Date: Tue, Dec 12, 2017 at 10:57 AM
Subject: Re: Darren's email
To: "Fields, Vanessa" <vanessa_fields@fws.gov>

Hi!

Thanks for your input too... I really wish we had been given more time in the pre-planning but it is what it is and I'll do my best to come up with something!

I will try to keep Darren posted. He doesn't check email and so it gets deactivated regularly. Usually someone just prints out whatever needs to be shared.

A:)

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Amy Lisk

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National Bison Range Complex
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Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
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Great Falls, MT 59404
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406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Vanessa Fields
Subject: DRAFT email to Amy and Beverly
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2017 3:13:33 PM

Amy and Beverly,

Vanessa and I will have a conference call on Thursday with our NEPA contractor and we were speaking this morning about how to begin preparing for the conference call and for the alternatives workshop in February. Thursday's conference call will begin the process of developing an agenda for February's workshop and a strategy to develop the alternatives.

Vanessa has added a subfolder titled "Guidance and Examples" within the "Alternatives" folder in the "NBR CCP" site within Google Drive. In it we will add later today or early tomorrow morning the agendas for some of the previous CCP alternatives workshops (e.g., Benton Lake, RMA) that have been carried out in Region 6, as well as handouts used during the workshops. Those files give a good idea of how alternatives workshops are run, but each planning process requires development of its own agenda, based on needs and available information.

For example, the agenda for the Benton Lake CCP alternatives workshop included addressing the HGM analysis and report, while the RMA CCP alternatives workshop didn't. This was done for the Benton Lake CCP because the HGM analysis was of paramount importance to determine the future direction of the management of the complex.

You inquired about things that you could do in the interim to prepare for the workshop. Since you two will be meeting this Thursday we want to suggest the following. We need to find out if, among the files from previous CCP attempts or among files un-related to the CCPs, both for NBRC and for Lost Trail (which for a while was part of Benton Lake Complex) similarly there is biological information of paramount importance that should be specifically addressed during the alternatives workshop.

Vanessa and I would like to hold a teleconference with all the NBRC staff sometime in mid to late January to brainstorm possible alternatives "themes" or ideas in preparation for the workshop in February. But it is important that before that teleconference we do our best to figure out if there are alternatives ideas or concepts and/or files and information developed for previous CCP efforts that can inform the current planning effort.

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: DRAFT email to Amy and Beverly
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2017 3:50:46 PM

Thanks for putting this together - great ideas - see my suggested edits below in blue (mostly based on questions Beverly asked). I will clean up the handouts/examples and post on the google drive, unless you have already done this?

On Tue, Dec 12, 2017 at 3:13 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Amy and Beverly,
>
> Vanessa and I will have a conference call on Thursday with our NEPA contractor and we were speaking this morning about how to begin preparing for the conference call and for the alternatives workshop in February. Thursday's conference call will begin the process of developing an agenda for February's workshop and a strategy to develop the alternatives.
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> For example, the agenda for the Benton Lake CCP alternatives workshop included some time at the beginning of the workshop to review the HGM analysis and report, while the RMA CCP alternatives workshop didn't. This was done for the Benton Lake CCP because the HGM analysis was of paramount importance to determine the future direction of the management of the complex.
>
> You inquired about things that you could do in the interim to prepare for the workshop. Since you two will be meeting this Thursday we want to suggest the following. We need to find out if, among the files from previous CCP attempts or among files un-related to the CCPs, both for NBRC and for Lost Trail (which for a while was part of Benton Lake Complex), there is biological information of paramount importance that should be specifically addressed during the alternatives workshop. For example, are the key documents/studies/reports that you refer to all the time? Is there any kind of recent biological information that would be a "game changer" for the future of Complex or any units? Are there "Big Ideas" you think should be addressed through the Alternatives, and if

> so, are there key resources that provide a foundation for these? Has there already been a set of alternatives developed in previous efforts that might be relevant to this process? If so, we might need to set aside some time at the start of the workshop to provide some summaries or review for the benefit of the whole planning team. What you two are doing for the Biological issues also needs to be considered for all of the other Goal topics....so if you have thoughts on who/how to tackle that, we are all ears!

As a starting point, we are going to try to develop one set of alternatives across the whole complex. Please see the Benton Lake examples on the google drive to see at least one way this can be done (Benton Lake had 2 refuges, a WMD and Easement programs from prairie potholes to mountain forests across an area the size of Maine, so it can be done). If we truly can't find a way to do this for your complex, then we will figure out a Plan B. Probably the EIS for the Range and the EA for the rest of the Complex will begin to diverge at the Objectives and Strategies step (which comes next).

> Vanessa and I would like to hold a teleconference with all the NBRC staff sometime in mid January to brainstorm possible alternatives "themes" or ideas in preparation for the workshop in February. But it is important that before that teleconference we do our best to figure out if there are alternatives ideas or concepts and/or files and information developed for previous CCP efforts that can inform the current planning effort.

If you have questions as you dive into things on Thursday, please don't hesitate to call or email us!

> --
> **Bernardo Garza**
> **Planning Team Leader**
> **Branch of Planning and Policy**
> **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region**
> **Office (303) 236-4377**
> **Fax (303) 236-4792**

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
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406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Fields, Vanessa
Subject: Re: DRAFT email to Amy and Beverly
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2017 3:57:19 PM

Fantastic edits and suggestions. Thanks Vanessa

I have not cleaned up nor added files to the Google Drive (I've had issues today adding files to the Google Drive, which I hope will be resolved soon).

I'll forward the email to Amy and Beverly.

On Tue, Dec 12, 2017 at 3:50 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> Thanks for putting this together - great ideas - see my suggested edits below in blue (mostly based on questions Beverly asked). I will clean up the handouts/examples and post on the google drive, unless you have already done this?
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From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Skinner, Beverly; Amy Lisk
Cc:	Vanessa Fields; Kelly Hogan; McCollister, Matthew
Subject:	Help needed in preparation for the alternatives workshop
Date:	Tuesday, December 12, 2017 4:02:57 PM

Amy and Beverly,

Vanessa and I will have a conference call on Thursday with our NEPA contractor and we were speaking this morning about how to begin preparing for the conference call and for the alternatives workshop in February. Thursday's conference call will begin the process of developing an agenda for February's workshop and a strategy to develop the alternatives.

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From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: DRAFT email to Amy and Beverly
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2017 4:05:43 PM

---

sounds good - can you cc' me on it please? thanks!

On Tue, Dec 12, 2017 at 3:57 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Fantastic edits and suggestions. Thanks Vanessa
>
> I have not cleaned up nor added files to the Google Drive (I've had issues today adding files to the Google Drive, which I hope will be resolved soon).
>
> I'll forward the email to Amy and Beverly.
>
> On Tue, Dec 12, 2017 at 3:50 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> > Thanks for putting this together - great ideas - see my suggested edits below in blue (mostly based on questions Beverly asked). I will clean up the handouts/examples and post on the google drive, unless you have already done this?
> >
> > On Tue, Dec 12, 2017 at 3:13 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:
> >
> > > Amy and Beverly,
> > >
> > > Vanessa and I will have a conference call on Thursday with our NEPA contractor and we were speaking this morning about how to begin preparing for the conference call and for the alternatives workshop in February. Thursday's conference call will begin the process of developing an agenda for February's workshop and a strategy to develop the alternatives.
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From:	Lisk, Amy
To:	Garza, Bernardo
Cc:	Skinner, Beverly; Vanessa Fields; Kelly Hogan; McCollister, Matthew
Subject:	Re: Help needed in preparation for the alternatives workshop
Date:	Tuesday, December 12, 2017 4:42:14 PM

Bernardo.

This is great. We certainly have issues and documents that are important to review- like our HGMA.
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Thanks so much,
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From:	Lisk, Amy
To:	Garza, Bernardo
Cc:	Skinner, Beverly; Vanessa Fields; Kelly Hogan; McCollister, Matthew
Subject:	Re: Help needed in preparation for the alternatives workshop
Date:	Tuesday, December 12, 2017 4:42:15 PM

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From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Lisk, Amy
Cc: Garza, Bernardo; Skinner, Beverly
Subject: Re: Help needed in preparation for the alternatives workshop
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2017 4:49:35 PM

Amy-

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From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Lisk, Amy
Cc: Garza, Bernardo; Skinner, Beverly
Subject: Re: Help needed in preparation for the alternatives workshop
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2017 4:50:18 PM

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From: Skinner, Beverly
To: Fields, Vanessa
Cc: Lisk, Amy; Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: Help needed in preparation for the alternatives workshop
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2017 4:57:23 PM

I agree with Amy. This is going to be very helpful. thanks

On Tue, Dec 12, 2017 at 4:49 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

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Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
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Office (303) 236-4377
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Amy Lisk

Wildlife Biologist
National Bison Range Complex
US Fish and Wildlife Service

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406-644-2211 x 217

> Fax: 406-644-2661
> amy_lisk@fws.gov
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To: Fields, Vanessa
Cc: Lisk, Amy; Garza, Bernardo
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From:	Fields, Vanessa
To:	Barbara Boyle
Cc:	Kelly Hogan; Bernardo Garza
Subject:	NBRC WAFWA update
Date:	Friday, December 15, 2017 12:05:37 PM
Attachments:	NBR Update 121417.docx

Barbara-

Please see attached update for Bison Range for WAFWA update. I had to leave town unexpectedly to help Jeff Warren and his family with his post surgery recovery, but if there are any questions I can be reached at 406-217-6473 or, of course, if Bernardo is available he can clarify anything that comes up.

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NATIONAL BISON RANGE COMPLEX COMPREHENSIVE CONSERVATION PLAN

Update December 2017

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is moving forward with the planning process for the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for the National Bison Range Complex (Complex). The Service is developing a CCP, along with an EIS, for the National Bison Range and a separate CCP, with an EA, for the Pablo, Lost Trail, and Ninepipe National Wildlife Refuges, and the Northwest Montana Wetland Management Districts. Running the two projects concurrently will allow the Service to save money and resources by combining public meetings and outreach efforts.

The initial public scoping period has ended. Public meetings were held in June in Kalispell and Polson and a third meeting was held in Missoula in August. The Service received over 125 written comments. Most of the comments were related to the future management of the National Bison Range. Key topics that were noted in several comments include the future management of the bison herd, invasive species, visitor services and the rich cultural history of the Bison Range and the surrounding landscape.

A draft Vision and set of Goals for the Complex were developed in November during a workshop held in Polson, Montana. The workshop was attended by Service staff and cooperating agencies on the Planning Team including the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and Lake County. A workshop to develop a draft range of Alternatives for future management is scheduled for the first week in February.

From:	Fields, Vanessa
To:	Barbara Boyle
Cc:	Kelly Hogan; Bernardo Garza
Subject:	NBRC WAFWA update
Date:	Friday, December 15, 2017 12:06:21 PM
Attachments:	NBR Update 121417.docx

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From:	Skinner, Beverly
To:	Garza, Bernardo
Cc:	Amy Lisk; Vanessa Fields; Kelly Hogan; McCollister, Matthew
Subject:	Re: Help needed in preparation for the alternatives workshop
Date:	Friday, December 15, 2017 12:36:27 PM

I see that it looks like Vanessa overcame the sharepoint issues and was able to add the documents. The items she added are going to be a huge help in getting us better prepared for the Feb meeting. thanks Vanessa!!

On Tue, Dec 12, 2017 at 4:02 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Amy and Beverly,
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http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Northwest_Montana_Flathead_County_WMD/

From: Griffin, Toni
To: Morris, Kendal
Cc: Pelz, Mark; McGarigal, Nancy; Joseph Lujan; Carol Torrez; Bernardo Garza
Subject: Re: "First-round" CCPs
Date: Friday, December 15, 2017 1:58:34 PM

Hi Nancy,

In R6 we have initiated "first-round" CCPs for the 554 refuges that were in existence when the Improvement Act was passed. We have two CCP processes currently underway. The first one includes 5 units (Charles M. Russell WMD, Lake Mason NWR, War Horse NWR, Hailstone NWR, Grass Lake NWR). The second process includes 4 units (National Bison Range, Pablo NWR, Ninepipe NWR, Lost Trail NWR).

We have a couple refuge units that were established after the Improvement Act was passed. The current discussion includes picking up these units when a CCP revision is completed for the landscape (LCD) in which these units are located.

Happy Friday!

Toni Griffin
Landscape Architect / Planning Team Leader
NWRS, Region 6, Branch of Refuge Planning
134 Union Blvd.
Lakewood, CO 80228
Ph: 303-236-4378
Telework: Tuesday, Friday

On Tue, Dec 12, 2017 at 9:27 AM, Morris, Kendal <kendal_morris@fws.gov> wrote:

> There's a senior management meeting here in Region 1 tomorrow to finalize plans. From what I have been able to gather thus far all options are on the table, from "staying the course" and finishing all (though I am not sure how with minimal resources) to working on most-needed step down plans for refuges that do not have final CCPs. I'll let you know as soon as I hear something.
>
> On Tue, Dec 12, 2017 at 7:25 AM, Pelz, Mark <mark_pelz@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> > Hey Nancy,
> >
> > We are moving ahead on our "first-round" CCPs. We have 2 that are nearly done and we just need to publish the NOAs. The other 2 are approaching the public draft stage.
> >
> > By the way, you're up way to early!
> >
> > Mark
> >
> > Mark Pelz
> > Chief, Natural Resources Division
> > Pacific Southwest Region
> > U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
> > 2800 Cottage Way, Room W-1832
> > Sacramento, CA 95825-1846

916-414-6504 (phone)
916-414-6497 (fax)
916-430-3267 (mobile)
mark_pelz@fws.gov

On Tue, Dec 12, 2017 at 6:21 AM, McGarigal, Nancy <nancy_mcgarigal@fws.gov> wrote:

> Hey Folks
>
> I believe your respective regions, like mine, still have some "first-round" CCPs to complete. Tomorrow I am supposed to present to our senior refuge leadership team my recommendations for continuing to work on them; evaluating each one separately. We have 6 left to do.
>
> I have several things I'm considering in making my recommendations, but am curious to know what decisions your regions have made. Is your region continuing to work on any draft and/or final CCPs? Or, are your planners being pulled back to work on other things?
>
> I'd appreciate hearing from you. I'd like to give our leadership team some national perspective.
>
> Thanks.
>
> nancy
>
> --
> Nancy McGarigal
> Northeast Region, Refuge System - Lead Natural Resource Planner
> 300 Westgate Center Drive
> Hadley, MA 01035
>
> office phone: 413-253-8562
> cell phone: 413-531-6594
> email: nancy_mcgarigal@fws.gov

--
Ken Morris, Conservation Planner
Branch of Planning and Visitor Services
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Pacific Region
ph (503) 231-6203
fax (503) 231-6187

From: Mansheim, Robert
To: Fields, Vanessa
Subject: Re: Bison Range website
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2017 11:33:28 AM

Vanessa,
I am not sure if I emailed you yet but I have to work with Google to change this as it was done using google maps which I was not given access too. So just know it is on my list.

Rob Mansheim | Digital Communications Specialist
USFWS Mountain-Prairie Region External Affairs
134 Union Blvd, Lakewood, CO 80228
robert_mansheim@fws.gov
303.236.4267
http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie

"Next time you are afraid to share ideas, remember someone once said in a meeting, 'let's make a film about a tornado full of sharks.'" -Anonymous

On Tue, Dec 5, 2017 at 8:12 AM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

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> It is a minor detail, but would it be possible to update the map on that same page (https://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/refuges/mt_Plan.php) so that the icon also reflects that it is 'in progress'? We have a very high level of interest from the public in this process and anything we can do to reduce confusion is very helpful.
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From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Mansheim, Robert
Cc: Bernardo Garza
Subject: Re: Bison Range website
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2017 11:35:15 AM

Robert-

thanks for the update and for tracking this down!! Happy Holidays!

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From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Mansheim, Robert
Cc: Bernardo Garza
Subject: Re: Bison Range website
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2017 11:35:58 AM

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From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Fields, Vanessa
Subject:	Re: NBRC WAFWA update
Date:	Tuesday, December 19, 2017 11:41:30 AM

Vanessa,

The only addition I would suggest is mentioning BIA, Sanders County, and MTFWP among the cooperating agencies.

Bernardo

On Fri, Dec 15, 2017 at 12:05 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

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> 406-217-6473 (cell)

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: NBRC WAFWA update
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2017 12:17:01 PM
Attachments: NBR Update 121417.docx

Good point - I thought about that - but had worded the sentence to indicate who was actually at the workshop. I revised the statement to acknowledge all of our cooperating agencies - does this look ok? I also presumed that Wally was representing Lake and Sanders county....if that isn't correct I can move Sanders county to the sentence with BIA and MFWP.

Let me know what you think and I bet if get this revised version to Barb/Amy today, they could still update it.

Thanks!

On Tue, Dec 19, 2017 at 11:41 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Vanessa,
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> The only addition I would suggest is mentioning BIA, Sanders County, and MTFWP among the cooperating agencies.
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> Bernardo
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> On Fri, Dec 15, 2017 at 12:05 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:
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NATIONAL BISON RANGE COMPLEX COMPREHENSIVE CONSERVATION PLAN

Update December 2017

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To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: NBRC WAFWA update
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2017 12:17:44 PM
Attachments: NBR Update 121417.docx

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From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Fields, Vanessa
Subject: Re: NBRC WAFWA update
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2017 12:27:04 PM

I like it!!

On Tue, Dec 19, 2017 at 12:17 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

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From:	Fields, Vanessa
To:	Barbara Boyle
Cc:	Amy Thornburg; Kelly Hogan; Bernardo Garza
Subject:	Bison Range WAFWA update
Date:	Tuesday, December 19, 2017 1:07:37 PM
Attachments:	NBR Update 121917.docx

Barb-

Bernardo and I are both finally back in the office today after both of us were out unexpectedly - we had one revision/update to the WAFWA update we provided last Friday - although all of our cooperating agencies were not at the Vision and Goals workshop, we wanted to make sure we mentioned everyone who was participating on the planning team (especially Montana Fish, wildlife and parks). I realize this is late, but we wanted to give this to you in case you thought it was important enough and/or there was time to make this adjustment.

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From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Barbara Boyle
Cc: Amy Thornburg; Kelly Hogan; Bernardo Garza
Subject: Bison Range WAFWA update
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2017 1:08:20 PM
Attachments: NBR Update 121917.docx

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From:	Fields, Vanessa
To:	Will Meeks
Cc:	Maureen Gallagher; Ryan Moehring; Bernardo Garza; Kelly Hogan
Subject:	NBR Public engagement and communications
Date:	Tuesday, December 19, 2017 1:21:59 PM

Will-

We would like to have a meeting to discuss our public engagement and overall communications strategy for the Bison Range Complex CCP. Bernardo and I have had some preliminary discussions with Maureen and Ryan to do a bit of brainstorming on how we want to approach this for the NBR. Maureen suggested that Bernardo, Ryan and I sketch out some ideas and schedule some time to present these ideas to both of you and get some feedback.

We are required under planning policy to develop an overall public involvement plan and we think that given the controversial nature of this project, and the high level of public interest, that it would be worthwhile to spend some extra effort to be as thoughtful, strategic and hopefully as effective as possible with our engagement of the public.

I have talked with Betsy to find some time on your schedule for Thursday, January 18th. We will come with some ideas for you to consider. We would like to then have an informal discussion about whether we are on the right track and how to proceed, before we formalize this and develop the final version.

If that all sounds good, we will look forward to talking with you about this on the 18th. If you have any questions beforehand, please let Bernardo, Ryan or myself know.

Thanks and Happy Holidays!

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Vanessa Fields
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406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From:	Fields, Vanessa
To:	Skinner, Beverly
Cc:	Garza, Bernardo; Amy Lisk; Kelly Hogan; McCollister, Matthew
Subject:	Re: Help needed in preparation for the alternatives workshop
Date:	Tuesday, December 19, 2017 1:40:15 PM

Bev and Amy-

How did your meeting last Thursday go? Are you feeling good about pulling information together? Any questions that came up?

If we need to schedule an impromptu call to chat, we can do that.

If not, happy holidays!

On Fri, Dec 15, 2017 at 12:36 PM, Skinner, Beverly <beverly_skinner@fws.gov> wrote:

> I see that it looks like Vanessa overcame the sharepoint issues and was able to add the documents. The items she added are going to be a huge help in getting us better prepared for the Feb meeting. thanks Vanessa!!
>
> On Tue, Dec 12, 2017 at 4:02 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> > Amy and Beverly,
> >
> > Vanessa and I will have a conference call on Thursday with our NEPA contractor and we were speaking this morning about how to begin preparing for the conference call and for the alternatives workshop in February. Thursday's conference call will begin the process of developing an agenda for February's workshop and a strategy to develop the alternatives.
> >
> > Vanessa has added a subfolder titled "Guidance and Examples" within the "Alternatives" folder in the "NBR CCP" site within Google Drive. In it we will add later today or early tomorrow morning the agendas for some of the previous CCP alternatives workshops (e.g., Benton Lake, RMA) that have been carried out in Region 6, as well as handouts used during the workshops. Those files give a good idea of how alternatives workshops are run, but each planning process requires development of its own agenda, based on needs and available information.
> >
> > For example, the agenda for the Benton Lake CCP alternatives workshop included some time at the beginning of the workshop to review the HGM analysis and report, while the RMA CCP alternatives workshop didn't. This was done for the Benton Lake CCP because the HGM analysis was of paramount importance to determine the future direction of the management of the complex.
> >
> > You inquired about things that you could do in the interim to prepare for the workshop. Since you two will be meeting this Thursday we want to suggest the following. We need to find out if, among the files from previous CCP attempts or among files un-related to the CCPs, both for NBRC and for Lost Trail (which for a while was part of Benton Lake Complex), there is biological information of paramount importance that should be specifically addressed during the alternatives workshop. For example, are the key documents/studies/reports that you refer to all the time? Is there any kind of recent

biological information that would be a "game changer" for the future of Complex or any units? Are there "Big Ideas" you think should be addressed through the Alternatives, and if so, are there key resources that provide a foundation for these? Has there already been a set of alternatives developed in previous efforts that might be relevant to this process? If so, we might need to set aside some time at the start of the workshop to provide some summaries or review for the benefit of the whole planning team. What you two are doing for the Biological issues also needs to be considered for all of the other Goal topics....so if you have thoughts on who/how to tackle that, we are all ears!

As a starting point, we are going to try to develop one set of alternatives across the whole complex. Please see the Benton Lake examples on the google drive to see at least one way this can be done (Benton Lake had 2 refuges, a WMD and Easement programs from prairie potholes to mountain forests across an area the size of Maine, so it can be done). If we truly can't find a way to do this for your complex, then we will figure out a Plan B. Probably the EIS for the Range and the EA for the rest of the Complex will begin to diverge at the Objectives and Strategies step (which comes next).

Vanessa and I would like to hold a teleconference with all the NBRC staff sometime in mid January to brainstorm possible alternatives “themes” or ideas in preparation for the workshop in February. But it is important that before that teleconference we do our best to figure out if there are alternatives ideas or concepts and/or files and information developed for previous CCP efforts that can inform the current planning effort.

If you have questions as you dive into things on Thursday, please don't hesitate to call or email us!

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
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--
Beverly Roedner Skinner
beverly_skinner@fws.gov
Wildlife Biologist
Lost Trail National Wildlife Refuge
6295 Pleasant Valley Road
Marion, Montana 59925
406-858- 2286
406-858-2218 (fax)

Visit our new websites at http://www.fws.gov/refuge/lost_trail/
http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Northwest_Montana_Flathead_County_WMD/

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From:	Will Meeks
To:	Fields, Vanessa
Cc:	Maureen Gallagher; Ryan Moehring; Bernardo Garza; Kelly Hogan
Subject:	Re: NBR Public engagement and communications
Date:	Tuesday, December 19, 2017 4:06:15 PM

Thanks for the note Vanessa. I think it's a great idea and have it on my calendar. I think blocking up to two hours (just to be safe) may be prudent.

Enjoy the holidays. Take care.

Will Meeks
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mountain-Prairie Region
Assistant Regional Director
National Wildlife Refuge System
303-236-4303(w)
720-541-0310 (c)

> On Dec 19, 2017, at 1:22 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:
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From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Betsy Matten
Subject: Fwd: NBR Public engagement and communications
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2017 7:50:35 AM

Hi Betsy -

Could you extend the calendar slot we set up with Will for January 18th at 10am to go until noon?

Thanks!

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Will Meeks** <will_meeks@fws.gov>
Date: Tue, Dec 19, 2017 at 4:06 PM
Subject: Re: NBR Public engagement and communications
To: "Fields, Vanessa" <vanessa_fields@fws.gov>
Cc: Maureen Gallagher <maureen_gallagher@fws.gov>, Ryan Moehring <ryan_moehring@fws.gov>, Bernardo Garza <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>, Kelly Hogan <kelly_hogan@fws.gov>

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From: Matten, Betsy
To: Fields, Vanessa
Subject: Re: NBR Public engagement and communications
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2017 8:01:51 AM

Hi Vanessa,
I changed the time on the invite and sent out a new invite (you should have received it) and also change the conference room time to two hours.
Betsy

On Wed, Dec 20, 2017 at 7:50 AM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

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> To: "Fields, Vanessa" <vanessa_fields@fws.gov>
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> > We would like to have a meeting to discuss our public engagement and overall communications strategy for the Bison Range Complex CCP. Bernardo and I have had some preliminary discussions with Maureen and Ryan to do a bit of brainstorming on how we want to approach this for the NBR. Maureen suggested that Bernardo, Ryan and I sketch

out some ideas and schedule some time to present these ideas to both of you and get some feedback.
>
> We are required under planning policy to develop an overall public involvement plan and we think that given the controversial nature of this project, and the high level of public interest, that it would be worthwhile to spend some extra effort to be as thoughtful, strategic and hopefully as effective as possible with our engagement of the public.
>
> I have talked with Betsy to find some time on your schedule for Thursday, January 18th. We will come with some ideas for you to consider. We would like to then have an informal discussion about whether we are on the right track and how to proceed, before we formalize this and develop the final version.
>
> If that all sounds good, we will look forward to talking with you about this on the 18th. If you have any questions beforehand, please let Bernardo, Ryan or myself know.
>
> Thanks and Happy Holidays!
>
> --
> Vanessa Fields
> Invasive Species Ecologist
> Division of Science Resources
> 922 Bootlegger Trail
> Great Falls, MT 59404
> 406-727-7400 x219
> 406-217-6473 (cell)
>

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

--
Betsy M. Matten, Administrative Officer
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 6
National Wildlife Refuge System
134 Union Blvd.
Lakewood, CO 80228
303-236-4307
Betsy_Matten@fws.gov

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Matten, Betsy
Subject: Re: NBR Public engagement and communications
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2017 8:05:39 AM

Fabulous! Thank you!!

On Wed, Dec 20, 2017 at 8:01 AM, Matten, Betsy <betsy_matten@fws.gov> wrote:

> Hi Vanessa,
> I changed the time on the invite and sent out a new invite (you should have received it) and also change the conference room time to two hours.
> Betsy
>
> On Wed, Dec 20, 2017 at 7:50 AM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> > Hi Betsy -
> >
> > Could you extend the calendar slot we set up with Will for January 18th at 10am to go until noon?
> >
> > Thanks!
> >
> > ---------- Forwarded message ----------
> > From: **Will Meeks** <will_meeks@fws.gov>
> > Date: Tue, Dec 19, 2017 at 4:06 PM
> > Subject: Re: NBR Public engagement and communications
> > To: "Fields, Vanessa" <vanessa_fields@fws.gov>
> > Cc: Maureen Gallagher <maureen_gallagher@fws.gov>, Ryan Moehring <ryan_moehring@fws.gov>, Bernardo Garza <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>, Kelly Hogan <kelly_hogan@fws.gov>
> >
> > Thanks for the note Vanessa. I think it's a great idea and have it on my calendar. I think blocking up to two hours (just to be safe) may be prudent.
> >
> > Enjoy the holidays. Take care.
> >
> > Will Meeks
> > U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
> > Mountain-Prairie Region
> > Assistant Regional Director
> > National Wildlife Refuge System
> > 303-236-4303(w)
> > 720-541-0310 (c)
> >
> > > On Dec 19, 2017, at 1:22 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:
> > >
> > > Will-
> > >
> > > We would like to have a meeting to discuss our public engagement and overall

communications strategy for the Bison Range Complex CCP. Bernardo and I have had some preliminary discussions with Maureen and Ryan to do a bit of brainstorming on how we want to approach this for the NBR. Maureen suggested that Bernardo, Ryan and I sketch out some ideas and schedule some time to present these ideas to both of you and get some feedback.
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--
Vanessa Fields
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Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Barbara Boyle
To: Fields, Vanessa
Cc: Amy Thornburg; Kelly Hogan; Bernardo Garza
Subject: Re: Bison Range WAFWA update
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2017 4:54:02 PM

Thank you Vanessa. It's on me, I forwarded this late with a quick turnaround. I provided Will the suggested topics on Friday He was going to review and turn in Monday.

You know, there is so much reporting ... weekly secretarial, wafwa, random stories....i suspect we'll have another shot for a more complete story :-)

Thank you!
Happy Holidays!

Barbara

> On Dec 19, 2017, at 1:07 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> Barb-
>
> Bernardo and I are both finally back in the office today after both of us were out unexpectedly - we had one revision/update to the WAFWA update we provided last Friday - although all of our cooperating agencies were not at the Vision and Goals workshop, we wanted to make sure we mentioned everyone who was participating on the planning team (especially Montana Fish, wildlife and parks). I realize this is late, but we wanted to give this to you in case you thought it was important enough and/or there was time to make this adjustment.
>
> Thanks!
> --
> Vanessa Fields
> Invasive Species Ecologist
> Division of Science Resources
> 922 Bootlegger Trail
> Great Falls, MT 59404
> 406-727-7400 x219
> 406-217-6473 (cell)
>
> <NBR Update 121917.docx>

SIGN-IN SHEET

National Bison Range Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plans

Purposes, Vision, and Goals Development Workshop

November 7, 2017, Polson, Montana

Name	Affiliation
Bernardo Garza	USFWS
Vanessa Fields	USFWS
Dale Becker	C.S.K.T
BRIAN UPTON	CSKT
Tom Reed	USFWS
Kevin J. Shinn	USFWS - Lost Trail
BERNIE PETERSEN	US FWS - BO - Acting NBR
Rob Bundy	USFWS - Benton Lake NWR Complex
Kelly Hogan	USFWS
Martin McDonald	USFWS
[illegible]	USFWS
[illegible]	USFWS
Amy Lisk	USFWS
Pat Jamieson	Lake Cty
Wally [illegible]	Lake Cty
GALE DECKER	LAKE COUNTY
Beverly Skinner	USFWS - Lost trail
Dennis Clairmont	CSKT Council

National Bison Range NWR Complex
Draft Goals

Cultural Resources Goal

Preserve and value the cultural resources and history of the National Bison Range Complex to connect staff, visitors, and community to the area's past and continuing traditions.

Partnerships and Collaboration Goal

Maintain and cultivate partnerships that help achieve the vision and supporting goals and objectives of the National Bison Range Complex to support wildlife and habitat conservation, research, foster awareness and appreciation of natural and cultural resources and provide education along with all necessary infrastructure of the inter-montane ecosystem of western Montana.

Recognizing its importance, we will collaborate with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and other Tribal governments in a manner consistent with the Service's Native American policy and with other Federal, State, and local government entities in a manner consistent with applicable Service policies.

Public Use Goal

Provide compatible, wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities, for persons of all abilities, to learn, enjoy, and appreciate the inter-montane landscape of western Montana, the fish and wildlife and plants.

Wildlife Management Goal

Protect, maintain, and restore healthy and diverse wildlife populations with respect to species that are endemic, migratory, and mandated species of concern.

Invasive Species Goal

Prevent, reduce, and contain the invasion and spread of noxious, invasive, and harmful nonnative species within the Complex while working with partners to address off-Complex infestations within the surrounding landscape.

Habitat Management Goal

Conserve, restore, and promote biological integrity in functional and sustainable ecologically diverse habitats of the inter-montane ecosystem of western Montana

Research and Science Goal

Encourage high quality research and promote the use of scientifically sound management decisions.

Administration and Operations Goal

Effectively use funding, staff, partnerships, volunteers, and equipment to restore and manage Complex habitats, conduct programs, and improve and maintain all necessary infrastructure to the benefit of the Complex and the Refuge System.

Monitoring and Adaptive Management Goal

Through the life of this plan, we will monitor and evaluate the consequences of our actions and use adaptive management to reach desired outcomes.

NATIONAL BISON RANGE NWR COMPLEX

DRAFT VISION STATEMENT

Relax and take a deep breath while you step back in time to reflect on what was, what is and what is yet to come. Immerse yourself in the inter-montane valleys of northwestern Montana shaped by glacial forces and steeped in rich cultural history.

This is a special landscape important to people age after age, where we pay tribute to the persons and peoples who set aside the lands, conserved the wildlife and plants, and were stewards of various components that make up the complex.

Visitors from all over the world travel to the NBRC which seeks to provide an opportunity to learn and experience varied habitats, abundant wildlife and the natural beauty of these lands.

NBRC safeguards these values and preserves connectivity across the landscape, forming continuity through time for future generations to treasure.

Each unit is unique, and collectively they have, and will continue, to contribute to the NBRC and the NWRS.

Partners foster cultural and natural resources conservation where the cultural history is expressed across the landscape. Unique opportunities to work with partners benefit many of the units within the Flathead Indian Reservation and other units located within traditional homelands of the Salish, Upper Pend d'Oreille, and Kootenai Tribes.

~~Acknowledge the uniqueness of each as a part of the National Wildlife Refuge System and the contributions of each component to the Complex, and implement appropriate diversified management actions.~~

~~Manage each unit for its uniqueness and its relevance to the NWRS.~~

From:	Fields, Vanessa
To:	Garza, Bernardo
Cc:	Erika Wettergreen
Subject:	Re: Alternatives Workshop Organizational Conference Call
Date:	Wednesday, December 27, 2017 9:10:56 AM
Attachments:	NBRC Purposes Vision and Goals Wkshp_Agenda.docx NBRC_draftGoals_110717.docx NBRC_draftVision_110717.docx SignInSheet_VGworkshop110717.pdf

---

draft vision and goals docs

On Wed, Dec 27, 2017 at 8:40 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Good morning ladies,
>
> Let us use the numbers below for our call today
>
> ---------- Forwarded message ----------
> From: **Garza, Bernardo** <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>
> Date: Wed, Dec 13, 2017 at 3:19 PM
> Subject: Alternatives Workshop Organizational Conference Call
> To: Sean Donahoe <sd@marstel-day.com>, Vanessa Fields <vanessa_fields@fws.gov>, Erika Wettergreen <ewettergreen@marstel-day.com>
>
> Folks,
>
> For tomorrow's conference call (1 PM ET, 11:00 AM MT) please use the following teleconference information:
>
> TOLL FREE DIAL-IN NUMBER:..... 866-715-6268
>
> PASS CODE NUMBER FOR THOSE DIALING IN:..... 3502932#
>
> --
> **Bernardo Garza**
> **Planning Team Leader**
> **Branch of Planning and Policy**
> **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region**
> **Office (303) 236-4377**
> **Fax (303) 236-4792**

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

National Bison Range Complex

Comprehensive Conservation Plans

Purposes, Vision, and Goals Workshop

Date: November 7, 2017

Place: Red Lion Inn Hotel, Polson, Montana

Workshop Purposes

- Revisit and clarify the purposes for which the units of the National Bison Range Complex (Complex) were established
- Develop working list of Qualities and review Issues raised during scoping period
- Collaboratively generate a Vision Statement that is congruent with the Service's mission and values and the purposes of the units of the Complex
- Collaboratively develop a set of Goals that will assist in attaining the Vision

8:30 am Welcome, personal introductions, review agenda, logistics and workshop purposes

8:45 am Review Service's and Refuge System Missions, and Purposes for each unit of the Complex

9:15 am Group Discussion: What are the qualities that make the Complex/planning area special and unique?

9:45 am Group Discussion: Review (and update as needed) list of issues raised during scoping process

10:15 am SHORT BREAK

10:30 am Introduction to and Development of a Vision Statement

- Define a vision statement and review model statements
- Discuss/vote on process for generating vision statement
- Develop draft vision statement
  - Break into Small Groups – Each Group Creates a Draft Vision Statement
  - Small Groups Present Draft Vision Statements
  - Vote: Whole Group Provides Feedback and Selects Draft Vision Statement to use as a Base for Further Development
    - What did you like about the vision statement chosen? Are there definite "keeper phrases"?
    - What important ideas from other statements should also be included?
- Refine draft Vision Statement and check if statement meets requirements

12:30 pm LUNCH BREAK (we plan to order-in from MacKenzie River Pizza)

1:00 pm Introduction to Goals

- Define goals, brainstorm list of necessary goals to develop, *and process for generating draft goals*

1:30 pm Break into Small Groups to Develop Draft Goals

- Small groups are assigned by duties/expertise to develop goals for specific topics

3:00 pm Small Groups Present Draft Goals

3:30 pm Refinement of Draft Goals

- Whole group comments on goals. Finalize most goals; get input for any future revisions

4:30 pm Recap and Next Steps

- Products from this workshop
- Where do we go from here?

5:00 pm Adjourn Workshop

From:	Erika Wettergreen
To:	Fields, Vanessa; Garza, Bernardo
Subject:	RE: Alternatives Workshop Organizational Conference Call
Date:	Wednesday, December 27, 2017 9:12:35 AM

---

thanks

From: Fields, Vanessa [mailto:vanessa_fields@fws.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, December 27, 2017 11:11 AM
To: Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>
Cc: Erika Wettergreen <ewettergreen@marstel-day.com>
Subject: Re: Alternatives Workshop Organizational Conference Call

draft vision and goals docs

On Wed, Dec 27, 2017 at 8:40 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

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> Let us use the numbers below for our call today
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> --
> **Bernardo Garza**
> **Planning Team Leader**
> **Branch of Planning and Policy**
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> **Office (303) 236-4377**
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Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
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--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Will Meeks
Cc: Kelly Hogan; Vanessa Fields
Subject: Re: Dates in Feb
Date: Wednesday, December 27, 2017 11:00:48 AM

Hello Will,

I have not sent the Alternatives Workshop invitation to the Cooperating Agencies because over the past few weeks Vanessa, the NEPA contractor and I were having a series of conference calls to figure out the format and length of the workshop. This morning we had our last conference call and we ascertained that the workshop will last three full days.

So the workshop will start at 8:00 am on Tuesday, February 6 and end around 4 pm on Thursday, February 8.

I will send the invitation to Brian Upton and the other cooperating agencies momentarily.

On Tue, Dec 26, 2017 at 9:07 AM, Will Meeks <will_meeks@fws.gov> wrote:

> Have we sent invites to all cooperating agencies? Brian U asked. I'd like to meet Council that week too when I'm up there.
>
> Will Meeks
> U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
> Mountain-Prairie Region
> Assistant Regional Director
> National Wildlife Refuge System
> 303-236-4303(w)
> 720-541-0310 (c)
>
> On Dec 26, 2017, at 8:49 AM, Hogan, Kelly <kelly_hogan@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> > Week of Feb 5. Assume travel day will be the 5 and meeting beginning the 6th.
> > K
> >
> > On Tue, Dec 26, 2017 at 8:44 AM, Will Meeks <will_meeks@fws.gov> wrote:
> >
> > > That are the dates exactly for the Alternative meeting for NBR? Thanks.
> > >
> > > Will Meeks
> > > U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
> > > Mountain-Prairie Region
> > > Assistant Regional Director
> > > National Wildlife Refuge System
> > > 303-236-4303(w)
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--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Neil Anderson; Jennifer Ekberg; Gale Decker; David Redhorse; Brian Upton; Kelly Hogan; Kevin Shinn; McCollister, Matthew; Vanessa Fields; Maureen Gallagher; Will Meeks
Subject:	National Bison Range Complex CCPs - Alternatives Development Workshop
Date:	Wednesday, December 27, 2017 11:15:49 AM

Planning Team,

I hope this message finds you and your families doing very well in this holiday season.

For the past weeks Vanessa and I have been working with our NEPA contractor on the format and agenda for the Alternatives Development Workshop for the National Bison Range Complex. As soon as the agenda is finalized we will provide it to you, together with some other workshop materials.

Meanwhile we want to announce to you that the workshop will take place at the Red Lion Hotel in Polson, Montana, on February 6, 7 and 8, 2018.

If you have any questions or comments please don't hesitate to contact us.

Happy New Year

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Gallagher, Maureen
To: bernardo_garza@fws.gov
Subject: out of the office Re: National Bison Range Complex CCPs - Alternatives Development Workshop
Date: Wednesday, December 27, 2017 11:15:57 AM

I will be out of the office on a long overdue vacation. I will not be responding to email or voicemail until I return on 1/8/18. Happy Holidays!

--
Maureen Gallagher
Deputy Assistant Regional Director
Refuges and Partners for Fish and Wildlife
Mountain Prairie Region
134 Union Blvd
Lakewood, CO
303/236/4304 o
720/772/0424 c
303/236/4792 fax

From: Shinn, Kevin
To: bernardo_garza@fws.gov
Subject: Out Of Office Re: National Bison Range Complex CCPs - Alternatives Development Workshop
Date: Wednesday, December 27, 2017 11:15:58 AM

I will be out of the office for most of the period using up Use or Lose leave. If you have an emergency, call my cell at 406-260-5192. Otherwise I will respond as soon as possible once I return.

Have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

--
Kevin J. Shinn
Manager/Federal Wildlife Officer
Lost Trail NWR/NW Montana WMD
406-858-2216 Office
406-260-5192 cell

From:	Brian Upton
To:	Garza, Bernardo
Subject:	RE: National Bison Range Complex CCPs - Alternatives Development Workshop
Date:	Friday, December 29, 2017 9:15:23 AM

Bernardo,

Could you also please add Dale Becker to the email listserve below? His address is Dale.Becker@cskt.org.

Thank you,
BU

From: Garza, Bernardo [bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, December 27, 2017 11:15 AM
To: Neil Anderson; Jennifer Ekberg; Gale Decker; David Redhorse; Brian Upton; Kelly Hogan; Kevin Shinn; McCollister, Matthew; Vanessa Fields; Maureen Gallagher; Will Meeks
Subject: National Bison Range Complex CCPs - Alternatives Development Workshop

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Happy New Year

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Brian Upton
Subject: Re: National Bison Range Complex CCPs - Alternatives Development Workshop
Date: Friday, December 29, 2017 9:20:49 AM

---

absolutely

On Fri, Dec 29, 2017 at 9:14 AM, Brian Upton <Brian.Upton@cskt.org> wrote:

> Bernardo,
>
> Could you also please add Dale Becker to the email listserve below? His address is Dale.Becker@cskt.org.
>
> Thank you,
> BU
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Garza, Bernardo [bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
> **Sent:** Wednesday, December 27, 2017 11:15 AM
> **To:** Neil Anderson; Jennifer Ekberg; Gale Decker; David Redhorse; Brian Upton; Kelly Hogan; Kevin Shinn; McCollister, Matthew; Vanessa Fields; Maureen Gallagher; Will Meeks
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--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader

Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
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From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Brian Upton
Subject: Re: National Bison Range Complex CCPs - Alternatives Development Workshop
Date: Friday, December 29, 2017 9:22:23 AM

Did you already forward my email on the alternatives workshop?

On Fri, Dec 29, 2017 at 9:14 AM, Brian Upton <Brian.Upton@cskt.org> wrote:

> Bernardo,
>
> Could you also please add Dale Becker to the email listserve below? His address is Dale.Becker@cskt.org.
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> **From:** Garza, Bernardo [bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
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--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader

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From:	Brian Upton
To:	Garza, Bernardo
Subject:	RE: National Bison Range Complex CCPs - Alternatives Development Workshop
Date:	Friday, December 29, 2017 9:27:45 AM

I did already forward it to Dale, so no need for you to. Thanks for checking

---

From: Garza, Bernardo [bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Friday, December 29, 2017 9:22 AM
To: Brian Upton
Subject: Re: National Bison Range Complex CCPs - Alternatives Development Workshop

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> If you have any questions or comments please don't hesitate to contact us.
> Happy New Year
>
> **Bernardo Garza**
> **Planning Team Leader**
> **Branch of Planning and Policy**
> **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region**
> **Office (303) 236-4377**
> **Fax (303) 236-4792**

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Brian Upton
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: RE: National Bison Range Complex CCPs - Alternatives Development Workshop
Date: Tuesday, January 2, 2018 10:19:09 AM

Hi Bernardo,

I heard back from Dale Becker, and he is on leave from January 23 through February 10th. Would it be possible to schedule the meetings during either February 13-15, or February 20-22?

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, December 27, 2017 11:16 AM
To: Neil Anderson; Jennifer Ekberg; Gale Decker; David Redhorse; Brian Upton; Kelly Hogan; Kevin Shinn; McCollister, Matthew; Vanessa Fields; Maureen Gallagher; Will Meeks
Subject: National Bison Range Complex CCPs - Alternatives Development Workshop

Planning Team,

I hope this message finds you and your families doing very well in this holiday season.

For the past weeks Vanessa and I have been working with our NEPA contractor on the format and agenda for the Alternatives Development Workshop for the National Bison Range Complex. As soon as the agenda is finalized we will provide it to you, together with some other workshop materials.

Meanwhile we want to announce to you that the workshop will take place at the Red Lion Hotel in Polson, Montana, on February 6, 7 and 8, 2018.

If you have any questions or comments please don't hesitate to contact us.

Happy New Year

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From:	Erika Wettergreen
To:	Garza, Bernardo
Cc:	Sean Donahoe
Subject:	Draft Agenda for NBRC CCP Alternatives Workshop - for your review
Date:	Tuesday, January 2, 2018 3:28:05 PM
Attachments:	NBRC_Alternatives Workshop Agenda DRAFT 1_2_18.docx

---

Good afternoon Bernardo,

I have attached a draft agenda for your review. I referred to the NBCR information and other CCP development materials that you had provided me. I would like to walk you through the draft agenda to explain the flow and the type of activities I am recommending.

I am available to chat any time on Thursday or any time after 11:00 on Friday.

Cheers,

Erika

National Bison Range Complex

Alternatives Workshop Agenda

Purpose: To bring the NBRC CCP Planning Team together to collaboratively develop a viable set of alternative plans for the NBCR CCPs.

Intended Outcome: Two-Three Alternative Management Plans with written descriptions and a completed Alternatives Matrix.

Location: Red Lion Inn, 209 Ridgewater Drive, Polson, MT 59860

Dates: February 6-8, 2018

DAY 1

Welcome and Workshop Introduction (15 minutes – Meeting leader)

- Welcome the group.
- Give overview of the workshop (intent and outcome).
- Describe roles and responsibilities of leader, facilitation team, planning team.
- Introduce facilitation team, who will go over workshop logistics.

Team Connection (15 minutes - Facilitator)

- Exercise designed to invigorate the attendees and prepare them for an interactive workshop.

Planning Process Reflection (30 minutes – Meeting Leader)

- Recap of CCP planning process, including review of alternative development steps.
- Provide synopsis of the previous CCP attempt, including what was discovered last time and which ideas seemed to still have traction.
- Present the outcomes of the CCP planning steps completed to date and describe what will happen next.
- Re-introduce Vision and Goals agreed upon at last workshop, recognizing that they will be the foundation for developing the alternatives.

Birds Eye View of NBR Complex (1 hour – NBRC staff)

- Provide overview presentation of the Complex units - highlighting the major issues/ areas of focus for each unit.
- Describe the importance of managing the units as one single complex.
- Discuss any relevant/ pertinent models/ studies (If there are items to introduce this would likely add to the time for this topic)

BREAK (30 minutes)

Goal Topic Area Generation (1 hour - Facilitator)

- Brainstorm range of topics that can be considered for implementation to achieve each goal area.
- Team consensus on set of topic areas to include in the alternative development process.

LUNCH (1.5 hours)

Current Complex Management Approach (1.5 hours - Facilitator)

- Assess current management approach as it relates to the goals and specific topic areas
- Fill in Alternatives Matrix with participant input (in large group setting)
- Determine where there may be need for adjustment to the topics based on team discussion

BREAK (30 Minutes)

Alternative Plan Concepts - Idea-sharing (1 hour - Participants)

- Provide a platform for participants to introduce alternative plan concepts. (This request will be made PRIOR to the workshop so participants have the option to prepare a brief alternative plan description.)
- This information will work toward getting the team to think about different concepts/ themes of alternative plans.

Day 1 Review (30 minutes – Facilitator)

- Highlight items covered and outcomes
- Team observations
- Look ahead to Day 2 activities

Team Dinner (optional)

DAY 2

Morning Check in – (15 Minutes -Facilitator)

- Exercise designed to energize the team and prepare them for a day of interaction

Day 2 Alignment – (15 minutes - Meeting Leader)

- Brief recap of Day 1 accomplishments
- Introduce Day 2 focus

Alternative Plan Concept Development – (1 hour – Facilitator)

- Small group discussion of possible concepts (referring to examples and presentations from Day 1)
- Small group introduction of Top Two Concepts with brief description

Morning Stretch – (30 minutes – All)

- Wall Walk – each participant selects the concepts that they would like to see move forward.
- This activity is part of the Morning Break.

Alternative Plan Concept Review – (1 hour - Facilitator)

- Team discusses the top tier of alternative concepts (2-3 concepts *in addition to the No Action Alternative*)
- Fine-tune the top tier concept descriptions
- Obtain team consensus on alternative concepts moving forward

Overview of Alternative Plan Development – (1 hour - Facilitator)

- Re-introduce Alternatives Matrix
- Review the Goals and specific topic areas
- Review the No Action Plan (from Day 1 activity)

LUNCH (1.5 Hours)

Alternative Plan Development – (2.5 hours - Facilitator)

- Small group activity to fill in the Alternatives Matrix for all three Alternative Plans
- An Afternoon Break will be integrated into this activity

Day 2 Review (30 minutes – Facilitator/All)

- Highlight items covered and outcomes
- Team observations
- Look ahead to Day 3 activities

Team Dinner (optional)

DAY 3

Morning Check in – (15 Minutes -Facilitator)

- Exercise designed to energize the team and prepare them for a day of interaction

Day 3 Alignment – (15 minutes - Meeting Leader)

- Brief recap of Day 1 accomplishments
- Introduce Day 2 focus

Alternative Plan Development Presentations – (2.5 hours – Alternative Advocate/ Facilitator)

- Each Alternative Plan will be introduced by a participant identified as the advocate for that alternative plan. They will walk the team through the Matrix information.
- Team will provide additional comments and suggestions for updating the matrix
- A checklist of items to consider will be provided to encourage the development of well-rounded, distinguishable, goal-oriented alternative plans.
- A **Morning Break** will be integrated into this exercise.

Workshop Reflection (30 minutes Facilitator/All)

- Review of items covered during the workshop
- Shared Observations team activity
- Individual feedback on the workshop process, logistics, and outcome (short questionnaire)

Next Steps, Team Recognition, and Workshop Closing – (15 Minutes-Meeting Leader)

Team Lunch (optional)

From: Will Meeks
To: Bernardo Garza
Subject: RE: National Bison Range Complex CCPs - Alternatives Development Workshop
Date: Tuesday, January 2, 2018 3:50:11 PM

Will the meeting go all day on Thursday?

Will Meeks
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mountain-Prairie Region
Assistant Regional Director
National Wildlife Refuge System
303-236-4303 (office)
720-541-0310 (cell)

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, December 27, 2017 11:16 AM
To: Neil Anderson <nanderson@mt.gov>; Jennifer Ekberg <jekberg@co.sanders.mt.us>; Gale Decker <gdecker@lakemt.gov>; David Redhorse <david.redhorse@bia.gov>; Brian Upton <brian.upton@cskt.org>; Kelly Hogan <kelly_hogan@fws.gov>; Kevin Shinn <kevin_shinn@fws.gov>; McCollister, Matthew <matthew_mccollister@fws.gov>; Vanessa Fields <vanessa_fields@fws.gov>; Maureen Gallagher <maureen_gallagher@fws.gov>; Will Meeks <Will_Meeks@fws.gov>
Subject: National Bison Range Complex CCPs - Alternatives Development Workshop

Planning Team,

I hope this message finds you and your families doing very well in this holiday season.

For the past weeks Vanessa and I have been working with our NEPA contractor on the format and agenda for the Alternatives Development Workshop for the National Bison Range Complex. As soon as the agenda is finalized we will provide it to you, together with some other workshop materials.

Meanwhile we want to announce to you that the workshop will take place at the Red Lion Hotel in Polson, Montana, on February 6, 7 and 8, 2018.

If you have any questions or comments please don't hesitate to contact us.

Happy New Year

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Griffin, Toni
Cc: Linda Moeder; Bernardo Garza; Matthew McCollister; Maureen Gallagher
Subject: Re: Accepted: Planning Branch Staff Meeting @ Wed Jan 3, 2018 9am - 10am (toni_griffin@fws.gov)
Date: Wednesday, January 3, 2018 8:00:54 AM

As a reminder, we will be trying our first combined Bison Range - Planning meeting this Monday. The plan is to discuss Bison Range CCP with the staff for the first 30 min, then sign-off and focus on other planning business. We will put the NBR agenda items on the calendar invite by Friday. We'll see how this goes!

On Tue, Jan 2, 2018 at 9:28 AM, Griffin, Toni <toni_griffin@fws.gov> wrote:

> Hi Everyone,
>
> I needed to cancel the Branch meeting tomorrow as I will be taking leave to attend a memorial service. Let's plan on getting together at our regular scheduled time next Monday Jan 8, 9-10am.
>
> Please be prepared to have a discussion regarding the critical functions of the Planning Branch. Will has requested that we submit a list of our top functions to him by Jan 15.
>
> Thanks,
> Toni
>
> **Toni Griffin**
> Landscape Architect / Planning Team Leader
> NWRS, Region 6, Branch of Refuge Planning
> 134 Union Blvd.
> Lakewood, CO 80228
> Ph: 303-236-4378
> Telework: Tuesday, Friday

On Tue, Jan 2, 2018 at 5:26 AM, Linda Moeder <linda_moeder@fws.gov> wrote:

> **Linda Moeder has accepted this invitation.**
>
> ## Planning Branch Staff Meeting
>
> Call in information
> phone #: 866-644-1852
> passcode: 8875993
>
> When Wed Jan 3, 2018 9am – 10am Mountain Time
>
> Where Refuges Conference Room (map)
>
> Calendar toni_griffin@fws.gov
>
> Who
> - toni_griffin@fws.gov - organizer
> - linda_moeder@fws.gov
> - maureen_gallagher@fws.gov
> - bernardo_garza@fws.gov
> - vanessa_fields@fws.gov
> - matthew_mccollister@fws.gov

Invitation from Google Calendar

You are receiving this email at the account toni_griffin@fws.gov because you are subscribed for invitation replies on calendar toni_griffin@fws.gov.

To stop receiving these emails, please log in to https://www.google.com/calendar/ and change your notification settings for this calendar.

Forwarding this invitation could allow any recipient to modify your RSVP response. Learn More.

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Will Meeks
Subject: Re: National Bison Range Complex CCPs - Alternatives Development Workshop
Date: Wednesday, January 3, 2018 8:38:52 AM

Yes, we expect to work on alternatives all three days of the workshop and end around 4:30 on Thursday.

On Tue, Jan 2, 2018 at 3:50 PM, Will Meeks <will_meeks@fws.gov> wrote:

> Will the meeting go all day on Thursday?
>
> Will Meeks
>
> U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
>
> Mountain-Prairie Region
>
> Assistant Regional Director
>
> National Wildlife Refuge System
>
> 303-236-4303 (office)
>
> 720-541-0310 (cell)
>
> **From:** Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
> **Sent:** Wednesday, December 27, 2017 11:16 AM
> **To:** Neil Anderson <nanderson@mt.gov>; Jennifer Ekberg <jekberg@co.sanders.mt.us>; Gale Decker <gdecker@lakemt.gov>; David Redhorse <david.redhorse@bia.gov>; Brian Upton <brian.upton@cskt.org>; Kelly Hogan <kelly_hogan@fws.gov>; Kevin Shinn <kevin_shinn@fws.gov>; McCollister, Matthew <matthew_mccollister@fws.gov>; Vanessa Fields <vanessa_fields@fws.gov>; Maureen Gallagher <maureen_gallagher@fws.gov>; Will Meeks <Will_Meeks@fws.gov>
> **Subject:** National Bison Range Complex CCPs - Alternatives Development Workshop
>
> Planning Team,
>
> I hope this message finds you and your families doing very well in this holiday season.
>
> For the past weeks Vanessa and I have been working with our NEPA contractor on the format and agenda for the Alternatives Development Workshop for the National Bison Range Complex. As soon as the agenda is finalized we will provide it to you, together with some other workshop materials.

Meanwhile we want to announce to you that the workshop will take place at the Red Lion Hotel in Polson, Montana, on February 6, 7 and 8, 2018.

If you have any questions or comments please don't hesitate to contact us.

Happy New Year

Bernardo Garza

Planning Team Leader

Branch of Planning and Policy

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region

Office (303) 236-4377

Fax (303) 236-4792

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Vanessa Fields
Subject:	Fwd: Draft Agenda for NBRC CCP Alternatives Workshop - for your review
Date:	Wednesday, January 3, 2018 9:07:08 AM
Attachments:	NBRC_Alternatives Workshop Agenda DRAFT 1_2_18.docx

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---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Erika Wettergreen** <ewettergreen@marstel-day.com>
Date: Tue, Jan 2, 2018 at 3:26 PM
Subject: Draft Agenda for NBRC CCP Alternatives Workshop - for your review
To: "Garza, Bernardo" <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>
Cc: Sean Donahoe <sd@marstel-day.com>

Good afternoon Bernardo,

I have attached a draft agenda for your review. I referred to the NBCR information and other CCP development materials that you had provided me. I would like to walk you through the draft agenda to explain the flow and the type of activities I am recommending.

I am available to chat any time on Thursday or any time after 11:00 on Friday.

Cheers,

Erika

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
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Office (303) 236-4377
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National Bison Range Complex

Alternatives Workshop Agenda

Purpose: To bring the NBRC CCP Planning Team together to collaboratively develop a viable set of alternative plans for the NBCR CCPs.

Intended Outcome: Two-Three Alternative Management Plans with written descriptions and a completed Alternatives Matrix.

Location: Red Lion Inn, 209 Ridgewater Drive, Polson, MT 59860

Dates: February 6-8, 2018

DAY 1

Welcome and Workshop Introduction (15 minutes – Meeting leader)

- Welcome the group.
- Give overview of the workshop (intent and outcome).
- Describe roles and responsibilities of leader, facilitation team, planning team.
- Introduce facilitation team, who will go over workshop logistics.

Team Connection (15 minutes - Facilitator)

- Exercise designed to invigorate the attendees and prepare them for an interactive workshop.

Planning Process Reflection (30 minutes – Meeting Leader)

- Recap of CCP planning process, including review of alternative development steps.
- Provide synopsis of the previous CCP attempt, including what was discovered last time and which ideas seemed to still have traction.
- Present the outcomes of the CCP planning steps completed to date and describe what will happen next.
- Re-introduce Vision and Goals agreed upon at last workshop, recognizing that they will be the foundation for developing the alternatives.

Birds Eye View of NBR Complex (1 hour – NBRC staff)

- Provide overview presentation of the Complex units - highlighting the major issues/ areas of focus for each unit.
- Describe the importance of managing the units as one single complex.
- Discuss any relevant/ pertinent models/ studies (If there are items to introduce this would likely add to the time for this topic)

BREAK (30 minutes)

Goal Topic Area Generation (1 hour - Facilitator)

- Brainstorm range of topics that can be considered for implementation to achieve each goal area.
- Team consensus on set of topic areas to include in the alternative development process.

LUNCH (1.5 hours)

Current Complex Management Approach (1.5 hours - Facilitator)

- Assess current management approach as it relates to the goals and specific topic areas
- Fill in Alternatives Matrix with participant input (in large group setting)
- Determine where there may be need for adjustment to the topics based on team discussion

BREAK (30 Minutes)

Alternative Plan Concepts - Idea-sharing (1 hour - Participants)

- Provide a platform for participants to introduce alternative plan concepts. (This request will be made PRIOR to the workshop so participants have the option to prepare a brief alternative plan description.)
- This information will work toward getting the team to think about different concepts/ themes of alternative plans.

Day 1 Review (30 minutes – Facilitator)

- Highlight items covered and outcomes
- Team observations
- Look ahead to Day 2 activities

Team Dinner (optional)

DAY 2

Morning Check in – (15 Minutes -Facilitator)

- Exercise designed to energize the team and prepare them for a day of interaction

Day 2 Alignment – (15 minutes - Meeting Leader)

- Brief recap of Day 1 accomplishments
- Introduce Day 2 focus

Alternative Plan Concept Development – (1 hour – Facilitator)

- Small group discussion of possible concepts (referring to examples and presentations from Day 1)
- Small group introduction of Top Two Concepts with brief description

Morning Stretch – (30 minutes – All)

- Wall Walk – each participant selects the concepts that they would like to see move forward.
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Alternative Plan Concept Review – (1 hour - Facilitator)

- Team discusses the top tier of alternative concepts (2-3 concepts *in addition to the No Action Alternative*)
- Fine-tune the top tier concept descriptions
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Overview of Alternative Plan Development – (1 hour - Facilitator)

- Re-introduce Alternatives Matrix
- Review the Goals and specific topic areas
- Review the No Action Plan (from Day 1 activity)

LUNCH (1.5 Hours)

Alternative Plan Development – (2.5 hours - Facilitator)

- Small group activity to fill in the Alternatives Matrix for all three Alternative Plans
- An Afternoon Break will be integrated into this activity

Day 2 Review (30 minutes – Facilitator/All)

- Highlight items covered and outcomes
- Team observations
- Look ahead to Day 3 activities

Team Dinner (optional)

DAY 3

Morning Check in – (15 Minutes -Facilitator)

- Exercise designed to energize the team and prepare them for a day of interaction

Day 3 Alignment – (15 minutes - Meeting Leader)

- Brief recap of Day 1 accomplishments
- Introduce Day 2 focus

Alternative Plan Development Presentations – (2.5 hours – Alternative Advocate/ Facilitator)

- Each Alternative Plan will be introduced by a participant identified as the advocate for that alternative plan. They will walk the team through the Matrix information.
- Team will provide additional comments and suggestions for updating the matrix
- A checklist of items to consider will be provided to encourage the development of well-rounded, distinguishable, goal-oriented alternative plans.
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Workshop Reflection (30 minutes Facilitator/All)

- Review of items covered during the workshop
- Shared Observations team activity
- Individual feedback on the workshop process, logistics, and outcome (short questionnaire)

Next Steps, Team Recognition, and Workshop Closing – (15 Minutes-Meeting Leader)

Team Lunch (optional)

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Vanessa Fields
Subject: Fwd: National Bison Range Complex CCPs - Alternatives Development Workshop
Date: Wednesday, January 3, 2018 1:36:41 PM

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Brian Upton** <Brian.Upton@cskt.org>
Date: Tue, Jan 2, 2018 at 10:18 AM
Subject: RE: National Bison Range Complex CCPs - Alternatives Development Workshop
To: "Garza, Bernardo" <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>

Hi Bernardo,

I heard back from Dale Becker, and he is on leave from January 23 through February 10th. Would it be possible to schedule the meetings during either February 13-15, or February 20-22?

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, December 27, 2017 11:16 AM
To: Neil Anderson; Jennifer Ekberg; Gale Decker; David Redhorse; Brian Upton; Kelly Hogan; Kevin Shinn; McCollister, Matthew; Vanessa Fields; Maureen Gallagher; Will Meeks
Subject: National Bison Range Complex CCPs - Alternatives Development Workshop

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Bernardo Garza

Planning Team Leader

Branch of Planning and Policy

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region

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Fax (303) 236-4792

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Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Brian Upton
Bcc: Vanessa Fields
Subject: Re: National Bison Range Complex CCPs - Alternatives Development Workshop
Date: Wednesday, January 3, 2018 4:18:50 PM

Hello Brian,

I'm not sure we can reschedule the alternatives workshop to the dates you suggest. The alternatives workshop was scheduled taking into consideration the NBRC staff duties (such as required training they must attend) and Will Meek's schedule.

However, I will ask Will if his schedule allows for the change in dates and I will contact the members of the NBRC staff and I'll let you know early next week if it is possible to reschedule the workshop.

Bernardo

On Tue, Jan 2, 2018 at 10:18 AM, Brian Upton <Brian.Upton@cskt.org> wrote:

> Hi Bernardo,
>
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> **Planning Team Leader**
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From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Vanessa Fields
Subject:	Fwd: Draft Agenda for NBRC CCP Alternatives Workshop - for your review
Date:	Thursday, January 4, 2018 8:45:03 AM

Good morning Vanessa,

Erika has confirmed our conference call tomorrow at 12:00 EST (10:00 MST).

I'll get a conference call # and send it to you and her.

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Erika Wettergreen** <ewettergreen@marstel-day.com>
Date: Thu, Jan 4, 2018 at 7:58 AM
Subject: RE: Draft Agenda for NBRC CCP Alternatives Workshop - for your review
To: "Garza, Bernardo" <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>

Sounds great Bernardo!

Talk to you tomorrow.

Cheers,

Erika

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, January 3, 2018 5:48 PM
To: Erika Wettergreen <ewettergreen@marstel-day.com>
Subject: Re: Draft Agenda for NBRC CCP Alternatives Workshop - for your review

Hello Erika,

Thank you for preparing and sending the agenda.

Vanessa and I have taken a look at it and have a few questions for you.

We could have a conference call with you at 12:00 pm (EST) on Friday.

Let me know if that still works for you.

Bernardo

On Tue, Jan 2, 2018 at 3:26 PM, Erika Wettergreen <ewettergreen@marstel-day.com> wrote:

> Good afternoon Bernardo,
>
> I have attached a draft agenda for your review. I referred to the NBCR information and other CCP development materials that you had provided me. I would like to walk you through the draft agenda to explain the flow and the type of activities I am recommending.
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> I am available to chat any time on Thursday or any time after 11:00 on Friday.
>
> Cheers,
>
> Erika

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Bernardo Garza

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--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: Draft Agenda for NBRC CCP Alternatives Workshop - for your review
Date: Thursday, January 4, 2018 8:51:16 AM

---

awesome - thanks!

On Thu, Jan 4, 2018 at 8:45 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Good morning Vanessa,
>
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> I'll get a conference call # and send it to you and her.
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> Date: Thu, Jan 4, 2018 at 7:58 AM
> Subject: RE: Draft Agenda for NBRC CCP Alternatives Workshop - for your review
> To: "Garza, Bernardo" <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>
>
> Sounds great Bernardo!
>
> Talk to you tomorrow.
>
> Cheers,
>
> Erika
>
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> **To:** Erika Wettergreen <ewettergreen@marstel-day.com>
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>
> Hello Erika,
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Let me know if that still works for you.

Bernardo

On Tue, Jan 2, 2018 at 3:26 PM, Erika Wettergreen <ewettergreen@marstel-day.com> wrote:

> Good afternoon Bernardo,
>
> I have attached a draft agenda for your review. I referred to the NBCR information and other CCP development materials that you had provided me. I would like to walk you through the draft agenda to explain the flow and the type of activities I am recommending.
>
> I am available to chat any time on Thursday or any time after 11:00 on Friday.
>
> Cheers,
>
> Erika

--

Bernardo Garza

Planning Team Leader

Branch of Planning and Policy

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region

Office (303) 236-4377

Fax (303) 236-4792

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--

Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Danno, Mary
Subject: Re: February NBR CCP Meeting
Date: Thursday, January 4, 2018 9:08:13 AM

Yes. We'll start at 8 or 8:30 each of the 3 days and we do expect to work until 4:30 or 5:00 on Thursday. But if we can finish developing alternatives before then, I will not keep anyone against their will :o)

On Thu, Jan 4, 2018 at 9:04 AM, Danno, Mary <mary_danno@fws.gov> wrote:

> great - - And just to confirm, both the 6th and 8th are full days? I'm just trying to determine which nights I'll need to reserve lodging at the Red Lion Inn.
>
> thanks,
>
> Mary Danno
>
> Visitor Services Manager
> Visitor Services and Outreach
> Region 6, National Wildlife Refuge System
> 303-236-4451
>
> (Lieu: Fridays)
>
> VSO Website: http://phpdev.fws.doi.net/rmansheim/typesetter/index.php/Branch_of_VSO
>
> On Thu, Jan 4, 2018 at 7:52 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> > Hello Mary,
> >
> > **BELATED MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU TOO!!!!!**
> >
> > Yes, we've scheduled the Alternatives Workshop for February 6 - 8, at the Red Lion Hotel in Polson.
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> >
> > On Thu, Jan 4, 2018 at 8:46 AM, Danno, Mary <mary_danno@fws.gov> wrote:
> >
> > > Hi Bernardo:
> > >
> > > Happy New Year!
> > >
> > > Do you have any info on the February NBR CCP meeting? I need to get it on my schedule and prepare my travel.

thanks very much,

Mary Danno

Visitor Services Manager
Visitor Services and Outreach
Region 6, National Wildlife Refuge System
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From: Danno, Mary
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: February NBR CCP Meeting
Date: Thursday, January 4, 2018 9:26:28 AM

---

absolutely no problem with the full days - - makes sense and a good use of our time together!

thanks very much!

Mary Danno

Visitor Services Manager
Visitor Services and Outreach
Region 6, National Wildlife Refuge System
303-236-4451

(Lieu: Fridays)

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From: Brian Upton
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: RE: National Bison Range Complex CCPs - Alternatives Development Workshop
Date: Thursday, January 4, 2018 10:30:32 AM

Thank you Bernardo!

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, January 03, 2018 4:19 PM
To: Brian Upton
Subject: Re: National Bison Range Complex CCPs - Alternatives Development Workshop

Hello Brian,

I'm not sure we can reschedule the alternatives workshop to the dates you suggest. The alternatives workshop was scheduled taking into consideration the NBRC staff duties (such as required training they must attend) and Will Meek's schedule.

However, I will ask Will if his schedule allows for the change in dates and I will contact the members of the NBRC staff and I'll let you know early next week if it is possible to reschedule the workshop.

Bernardo

On Tue, Jan 2, 2018 at 10:18 AM, Brian Upton <Brian.Upton@cskt.org> wrote:
Hi Bernardo,

I heard back from Dale Becker, and he is on leave from January 23 through February 10th. Would it be possible to schedule the meetings during either February 13-15, or February 20-22?

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, December 27, 2017 11:16 AM
To: Neil Anderson; Jennifer Ekberg; Gale Decker; David Redhorse; Brian Upton; Kelly Hogan; Kevin Shinn; McCollister, Matthew; Vanessa Fields; Maureen Gallagher; Will Meeks
Subject: National Bison Range Complex CCPs - Alternatives Development Workshop

Planning Team,

I hope this message finds you and your families doing very well in this holiday season.

For the past weeks Vanessa and I have been working with our NEPA contractor on the format and agenda for the Alternatives Development Workshop for the National Bison Range Complex. As soon as the agenda is finalized we will provide it to you, together with some other workshop materials.

Meanwhile we want to announce to you that the workshop will take place at the Red Lion Hotel in Polson, Montana, on February 6, 7 and 8, 2018.

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Happy New Year

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From: Brian Upton
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: RE: National Bison Range Complex CCPs - Alternatives Development Workshop
Date: Thursday, January 4, 2018 11:56:56 AM

Hi Bernardo,

Dale just informed me that he now has a conflict/commitment on Feb. 20-23 as well. Sorry for the confusion, but please advise if scheduling meetings the week of February 12th may work.

Thank you,
BU

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
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From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Brian Upton
Subject: Re: National Bison Range Complex CCPs - Alternatives Development Workshop
Date: Thursday, January 4, 2018 12:03:46 PM

I'll do my best to accommodate Dale's schedule. Rescheduling would work for me but it depends on whether Will and the NBRC staff can make it work.

On Thu, Jan 4, 2018 at 11:56 AM, Brian Upton <Brian.Upton@cskt.org> wrote:

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From:	Brian Upton
To:	Garza, Bernardo
Subject:	RE: National Bison Range Complex CCPs - Alternatives Development Workshop
Date:	Thursday, January 4, 2018 12:23:07 PM

Thanks Bernardo. I understand, and we appreciate your effort.

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Thursday, January 04, 2018 12:04 PM
To: Brian Upton
Subject: Re: National Bison Range Complex CCPs - Alternatives Development Workshop

I'll do my best to accommodate Dale's schedule. Rescheduling would work for me but it depends on whether Will and the NBRC staff can make it work.

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From: Erika Wettergreen
To: Fields, Vanessa; Garza, Bernardo
Cc: Sean Donahoe
Subject: Updated DRAFT NBRC Alternatives Workshop Agenda - for your review
Date: Friday, January 5, 2018 3:01:40 PM
Attachments: NBRC_Alternatives Workshop Agenda DRAFT 1_5_18.docx

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Good afternoon Vanessa and Bernardo,

I have attached the updated external workshop agenda for your review. I have incorporated the edits and changes we discussed during our teleconference earlier today. (Please let me know if I forgot anything.)

The items highlighted in the agenda are those topics still under consideration for inclusion. (Let me know if the topic for Will Meek's discussion of the Complex is acceptable)

I will start to build the internal process agenda on Monday, using the attached agenda as my guide. I will make updates to the draft process agenda when I receive any additional comments/ changes from you all on the attached workshop agenda. My plan is to get you the draft process agenda by next Wednesday (JAN 10).

The following are the materials that I recommend sending to the workshop participants prior to workshop. The items that have already been completed are reflected in GREEN.

- Alternatives Workshop Agenda
- Suggested list of Goal Topic Areas
- Alternatives Instruction Handout (*may need to update the current version to align with agenda flow – may also want to hold off and provide this as handout at workshop???*)
- National Bison Range Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plans Scoping Report
- Examples of Concepts/Themes and Actions
- National Bison Range NWR Complex Vision Statement and Goals

Hope you both have a fantastic weekend!

Happily,

Erika

National Bison Range Complex

Comprehensive Conservation Plan
Alternatives Workshop Agenda

Purpose: To bring the NBRC CCP Planning Team together to collaboratively develop a viable set of alternative plans for the NBRC CCPs.

Intended Outcome: Range of Management Alternatives with written descriptions and a completed Alternatives Matrix.

Location: Red Lion Inn, 209 Ridgewater Drive, Polson, MT 59860

Dates: February 6-8, 2018

DAY 1

8:30 Welcome and Workshop Introduction

- Welcome the planning team.
- Give overview of the workshop (intent and outcome).
- Describe roles and responsibilities of workshop leaders, facilitation team, planning team.
- Introduce facilitation team, who will go over workshop logistics.

8:45 Team Connection

- Exercise designed to invigorate the attendees and prepare them for an interactive workshop.

9:00 Planning Process Reflection

- Recap of CCP planning process, including review of alternative development steps.
- Provide synopsis of the previous CCP attempt, including what was discovered last time and which ideas seemed to still have traction.
- Present the outcomes of the CCP planning steps completed to date and describe what happens next.
- Re-introduce CCP Vision and Goals agreed upon at last workshop, recognizing that they will be the foundation for developing the alternatives.

9:30 Birds Eye View of NBR Complex

- Projected USFWS approach to managing NBRC within a more comprehensive Refuge context
- Describe the importance of managing the NBRC units as one single complex, highlighting the major issues/ areas of focus for each unit.
- Discuss any relevant/ pertinent models/ studies

10:30 BREAK

11:00 CCP Goal Topic Area Generation

- Discuss list of suggested goal topic areas provided as read-ahead
- Determine if there are other topic areas that should be incorporated to achieve each CCP goal.
- Team consensus on final set of topic areas to include in the alternatives development process.

12:00 LUNCH

1:30 Current Complex Management Approach

- Assess current management approach as it relates to the CCP goals and specific topic areas
- Populate the No Action portion of the Alternatives Matrix with participant input
- Determine where there may be need for adjustment to the topic areas based on team discussion

3:00 BREAK

3:30 Management Alternative Concepts - Idea-sharing

- Provide a platform for participants to introduce alternative concepts. (This request will be made PRIOR to the workshop so participants have the option to prepare a brief alternative concept description.)
- This information will work toward getting the team to think about different concepts/ themes for alternatives.

4:30 Day 1 Review

- Highlight items covered and outcomes
- Team observations
- Look ahead to Day 2 activities

5:00 End of Day 1

Team Dinner (optional)

DAY 2

8:00 Morning Check in

- Exercise designed to energize the team and prepare them for a day of interaction

8:15 Day 2 Alignment

- Brief recap of Day 1 accomplishments
- Introduction of Day 2 focus

8:30 Management Alternatives Concept Development

- Small group discussion of possible concepts (refer to examples and presentations from Day 1)
- Small group introduction of strongest concepts with brief descriptions

9:30 Morning Stretch

- Wall Walk – Participant select the alternative concepts that they would like to see move forward.
- This activity is part of the **Morning Break**.

10:00 Management Alternatives Concept Review

- Team discusses the top tier of management alternatives concepts
- Fine-tune the descriptions of top tier management alternative concepts
- Obtain team consensus on management alternative concepts moving forward

11:00 Overview of Alternatives Development

- Re-introduce Alternatives Matrix, CCP goals, and specific topic areas
- Review the No Action Plan portion of the Alternatives Matrix (from Day 1 activity)
- Develop key components of CCP goal topic areas for inclusion into alternative concepts

12:00 LUNCH

1:30 Alternatives Development

- Small group activity to fill in the Alternatives Matrix for the alternatives
- Key components of CCP goal topic areas worksheets will be incorporated into the matrix input
- A checklist of items to consider when populating the matrix will be provided to encourage the development of well-rounded, distinguishable, goal-oriented alternatives.
- An **Afternoon Break** will be integrated into this activity

4:30 Day 2 Review

- Highlight workshop items covered and outcomes
- Team observations
- Look ahead to Day 3 activities

5:00 End of Day 2

Team Dinner (optional)

DAY 3

8:00 Morning Check in

- Exercise designed to energize the team and prepare them for a day of interaction

8:15 Day 3 Alignment

- Brief recap of Day 2 accomplishments
- Introduction of Day 3 focus

8:30 Alternatives Presentations

- Each Alternative will be introduced by a participant identified as the advocate for that alternative. They will walk the planning team through the Alternatives Matrix information.
- Planning Team will provide additional comments and suggestions for updating the matrix information.
- A checklist will be provided to encourage the development of well-rounded, distinguishable, goal-oriented alternatives.
- A **Morning Break** will be integrated into this exercise.

11:00 Alternatives Refinement

- Provide additional input to the alternatives presented for team consideration.

11:30 Team Lunch (optional)

1:00 Team Review of Alternatives Refinement

- Planning team will review and consider additional input and update the alternatives accordingly.

2:30 Workshop Reflection

- Review of items covered during the workshop
- Shared observations team activity
- Individual feedback on the workshop process, logistics, and outcome (short questionnaire)

3:30 Next Steps, Team Recognition, and Workshop Closing

4:00 Conclusion of Alternatives Workshop

From: Skinner, Beverly
To: Fields, Vanessa
Subject: Re: Help needed in preparation for the alternatives workshop
Date: Monday, January 8, 2018 8:11:10 AM

Making my way through 3 weeks of emails this morning. Sorry for the delay but sure did need the time off.

Amy and I talked on the phone for an hour or so before the holidays. I opted not to drive down since the weather was bad and it is a 6 hour round trip for me and she wanted to include our meeting with a Christmas party. Summer maybe but not with winter roads etc.

I think we had a good talk. We kicked around some ideas and then I shared with her my thinking.

I do not think we can have alternatives across the entire complex and I shared that with Amy. After giving it a lot of thought I think we actually have two types of land - refuges and WPAs that are really more public use based and then refuges and WPAs that are more resource based. I was asked to attend the Urban and High Visitation Refuge meeting in Denver before the holidays and it cleared up some of my misperceptions of "urban" refuges. The term "Urban" Refuges is not meant to mean only refuges in cities. Our region at least wants to make sure it also includes high visitation refuges such as the Bison Range and some of our WPAs. I think we should take advantage of this new movement to highlight refuges/WPAs that receive high visitation (Bison Range itself and Flathead WPA for example) and move more to managing/educating for people and not so much resource/research based. Others such as Lost Trail and McGregor WPA receive little visitation by the general public and therefore serve a different role.

If we go in this direction for the complex, we will have two main alternatives which breaks the land base for the complex into two but not necessarily the same as a Lost Trail and Bison Range break.

I made it through most of our files and found some files of interest that I need to pull and look though more closely. Of course we have a CCP already for the refuge so I assume this was all done the first time around. We do not have a lot of info on several of our WPAs but the high visitation ones do have more than the others. I made some notes so I can go back and relocated files when the time is right.

Guess we will be talking in less than an hour.

On Tue, Dec 19, 2017 at 1:40 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> Bev and Amy-
>
> How did your meeting last Thursday go? Are you feeling good about pulling information together? Any questions that came up?
>
> If we need to schedule an impromptu call to chat, we can do that.
>
> If not, happy holidays!

On Fri, Dec 15, 2017 at 12:36 PM, Skinner, Beverly <beverly_skinner@fws.gov> wrote:

I see that it looks like Vanessa overcame the sharepoint issues and was able to add the documents. The items she added are going to be a huge help in getting us better prepared for the Feb meeting. thanks Vanessa!!

On Tue, Dec 12, 2017 at 4:02 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

Amy and Beverly,

Vanessa and I will have a conference call on Thursday with our NEPA contractor and we were speaking this morning about how to begin preparing for the conference call and for the alternatives workshop in February. Thursday's conference call will begin the process of developing an agenda for February's workshop and a strategy to develop the alternatives.

Vanessa has added a subfolder titled "Guidance and Examples" within the "Alternatives" folder in the "NBR CCP" site within Google Drive. In it we will add later today or early tomorrow morning the agendas for some of the previous CCP alternatives workshops (e.g., Benton Lake, RMA) that have been carried out in Region 6, as well as handouts used during the workshops. Those files give a good idea of how alternatives workshops are run, but each planning process requires development of its own agenda, based on needs and available information.

For example, the agenda for the Benton Lake CCP alternatives workshop included some time at the beginning of the workshop to review the HGM analysis and report, while the RMA CCP alternatives workshop didn't. This was done for the Benton Lake CCP because the HGM analysis was of paramount importance to determine the future direction of the management of the complex.

You inquired about things that you could do in the interim to prepare for the workshop. Since you two will be meeting this Thursday we want to suggest the following. We need to find out if, among the files from previous CCP attempts or among files un-related to the CCPs, both for NBRC and for Lost Trail (which for a while was part of Benton Lake Complex), there is biological information of paramount importance that should be specifically addressed during the alternatives workshop. For example, are the key documents/studies/reports that you refer to all the time? Is there any kind of recent biological information that would be a "game changer" for the future of Complex or any units? Are there "Big Ideas" you think should be addressed through the Alternatives, and if so, are there key resources that provide a foundation for these? Has there already been a set of alternatives developed in previous efforts that might be relevant to this process? If so, we might need to set aside some time at the start of the workshop to provide some summaries or review for the benefit of the whole planning team. What you two are doing for the Biological issues also needs to be considered for all of the other Goal topics....so if you have thoughts on who/how to tackle that, we are all ears!

As a starting point, we are going to try to develop one set of alternatives across the whole complex. Please see the Benton Lake examples on the google drive to see at least one way this can be done (Benton Lake had 2 refuges, a WMD and Easement programs from prairie potholes to mountain forests across an area the size of Maine, so it can be done). If we truly can't find a way to do this for your complex, then we will figure out a Plan B. Probably the EIS for the Range and the EA for the rest of the Complex will

begin to diverge at the Objectives and Strategies step (which comes next).

Vanessa and I would like to hold a teleconference with all the NBRC staff sometime in mid January to brainstorm possible alternatives “themes” or ideas in preparation for the workshop in February. But it is important that before that teleconference we do our best to figure out if there are alternatives ideas or concepts and/or files and information developed for previous CCP efforts that can inform the current planning effort.

If you have questions as you dive into things on Thursday, please don't hesitate to call or email us!

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
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Office (303) 236-4377
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Visit our new websites at http://www.fws.gov/refuge/lost_trail/
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From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Bernardo Garza
Subject: Fwd: Help needed in preparation for the alternatives workshop
Date: Monday, January 8, 2018 8:47:27 AM

FYI -
---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Skinner, Beverly** <beverly_skinner@fws.gov>
Date: Mon, Jan 8, 2018 at 8:11 AM
Subject: Re: Help needed in preparation for the alternatives workshop
To: "Fields, Vanessa" <vanessa_fields@fws.gov>

Making my way through 3 weeks of emails this morning. Sorry for the delay but sure did need the time off.

Amy and I talked on the phone for an hour or so before the holidays. I opted not to drive down since the weather was bad and it is a 6 hour round trip for me and she wanted to include our meeting with a Christmas party. Summer maybe but not with winter roads etc.

I think we had a good talk. We kicked around some ideas and then I shared with her my thinking.

I do not think we can have alternatives across the entire complex and I shared that with Amy. After giving it a lot of thought I think we actually have two types of land - refuges and WPAs that are really more public use based and then refuges and WPAs that are more resource based. I was asked to attend the Urban and High Visitation Refuge meeting in Denver before the holidays and it cleared up some of my misperceptions of "urban" refuges. The term "Urban" Refuges is not meant to mean only refuges in cities. Our region at least wants to make sure it also includes high visitation refuges such as the Bison Range and some of our WPAs. I think we should take advantage of this new movement to highlight refuges/WPAs that receive high visitation (Bison Range itself and Flathead WPA for example) and move more to managing/educating for people and not so much resource/research based. Others such as Lost Trail and McGregor WPA receive little visitation by the general public and therefore serve a different role.

If we go in this direction for the complex, we will have two main alternatives which breaks the land base for the complex into two but not necessarily the same as a Lost Trail and Bison Range break.

I made it through most of our files and found some files of interest that I need to pull and look though more closely. Of course we have a CCP already for the refuge so I assume this was all done the first time around. We do not have a lot of info on several of our WPAs but the high visitation ones do have more than the others. I made some notes so I can go back and relocated files when the time is right.

Guess we will be talking in less than an hour.

On Tue, Dec 19, 2017 at 1:40 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> Bev and Amy-

How did your meeting last Thursday go? Are you feeling good about pulling information together? Any questions that came up?

If we need to schedule an impromptu call to chat, we can do that.

If not, happy holidays!

On Fri, Dec 15, 2017 at 12:36 PM, Skinner, Beverly <beverly_skinner@fws.gov> wrote:

> I see that it looks like Vanessa overcame the sharepoint issues and was able to add the documents. The items she added are going to be a huge help in getting us better prepared for the Feb meeting. thanks Vanessa!!
>
> On Tue, Dec 12, 2017 at 4:02 PM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> > Amy and Beverly,
> >
> > Vanessa and I will have a conference call on Thursday with our NEPA contractor and we were speaking this morning about how to begin preparing for the conference call and for the alternatives workshop in February. Thursday's conference call will begin the process of developing an agenda for February's workshop and a strategy to develop the alternatives.
> >
> > Vanessa has added a subfolder titled "Guidance and Examples" within the "Alternatives" folder in the "NBR CCP" site within Google Drive. In it we will add later today or early tomorrow morning the agendas for some of the previous CCP alternatives workshops (e.g., Benton Lake, RMA) that have been carried out in Region 6, as well as handouts used during the workshops. Those files give a good idea of how alternatives workshops are run, but each planning process requires development of its own agenda, based on needs and available information.
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If you have questions as you dive into things on Thursday, please don't hesitate to call or email us!

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From:	Fields, Vanessa
To:	Maureen Gallagher
Subject:	Fwd: NBR Public engagement and communications
Date:	Monday, January 8, 2018 12:09:11 PM

Maureen-

Happy New Year!

I have a couple of questions/requests for you regarding our meeting next week to discuss the NBRC public engagement and communications strategy-

-I was wondering if I could possibly come in to Denver for that meeting? I would propose flying in Wed afternoon and heading back Thursday evening. I guess I have some old-school in me and really appreciate being able to sit down face-to-face with folks, and since I haven't been able to do that with Will and you on this topic, I thought this could be a good opportunity. I could also use that afternoon then with Bernardo and Ryan to build on our morning conversation and possibly hash out the plan that same day. I realize we are being sensitive to our travel budgets, so if it won't work, I completely understand.

-Also, would it be a good idea to invite Kent Sundseth to call into our meeting as well?

Thanks!

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Fields, Vanessa** <vanessa_fields@fws.gov>
Date: Tue, Dec 19, 2017 at 1:21 PM
Subject: NBR Public engagement and communications
To: Will Meeks <will_meeks@fws.gov>
Cc: Maureen Gallagher <maureen_gallagher@fws.gov>, Ryan Moehring <ryan_moehring@fws.gov>, Bernardo Garza <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>, Kelly Hogan <kelly_hogan@fws.gov>

Will-

We would like to have a meeting to discuss our public engagement and overall communications strategy for the Bison Range Complex CCP. Bernardo and I have had some preliminary discussions with Maureen and Ryan to do a bit of brainstorming on how we want to approach this for the NBR. Maureen suggested that Bernardo, Ryan and I sketch out some ideas and schedule some time to present these ideas to both of you and get some feedback.

We are required under planning policy to develop an overall public involvement plan and we think that given the controversial nature of this project, and the high level of public interest, that it would be worthwhile to spend some extra effort to be as thoughtful, strategic and hopefully as effective as possible with our engagement of the public.

I have talked with Betsy to find some time on your schedule for Thursday, January 18th. We will come with some ideas for you to consider. We would like to then have an informal

discussion about whether we are on the right track and how to proceed, before we formalize this and develop the final version.

If that all sounds good, we will look forward to talking with you about this on the 18th. If you have any questions beforehand, please let Bernardo, Ryan or myself know.

Thanks and Happy Holidays!

--
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From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Toni Griffin
Subject: so 3355
Date: Tuesday, January 9, 2018 9:52:57 AM

Good morning! Could you send me that FWS response to SO3355 - I am going to forward that on to the NBRC staff.

Thank you!

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
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United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Washington, D.C. 20240

DEC 1 1 2017

In Reply Refer To:
FWS/AES/DER/BNC/066735

Memorandum

To: Deputy Secretary

Through: Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks

From: Principal Deputy Director

Subject: Response to the Deliverables Outlined in Secretary's Order 3355 on "Streamlining National Environmental Policy Act Reviews and Implementation of Executive Order 13807, 'Establishing Discipline and Accountability in the Environmental Review and Permitting Process for Infrastructure Projects'"

I. Introduction

This memorandum identifies the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) Actions and Recommendations pursuant to Secretary's Order 3355 Section 4(b), 4(c)(2), and 4(d)(2).

II. Background

The Executive Order (E.O.) 13807 on *Establishing Discipline and Accountability in the Environmental Review and Permitting Process for Infrastructure* and the Secretary's Order (S.O.) 3355 *Streamlining National Environmental Policy Act Reviews and Implementation of E.O. 13807* instructs agencies to implement improvements, identify impediments, and recommend actions to streamline to the NEPA review process.

III. Discussion

FWS Response to Section 4(b) Setting Target Page and Timing Limitations for the Preparation of Environmental Assessments (EAs).

Recommendations for target page limitations for preparation of EAs: FWS recommends a target of approximately 25-30 pages in length, excluding appendices, recognizing that more complex EAs may need to be longer than this but should not generally exceed 50 pages. This target is greater than the 1981 CEQ guidance, but litigation, CEQ's regulations, and Executive Orders since 1981 now make it less feasible to meet a 10-15 page length limit.

Recommendations for time deadlines for preparation of EAs: FWS recommends the target to complete EAs for which it is the lead agency be no longer than one year. The recommendation is based on our experience working with applicants during the permit or environmental review process. While FWS makes every effort to complete EAs as quickly as possible, some EAs, while not rising to the level of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), can be relatively complex. In addition, the amount of time needed to develop an EA can be influenced by the responsiveness of applicants for information, competing workloads priorities, and the time to complete the surname process. A shorter timeframe may be achievable if staff are provided with training, tools such as EA templates, and an expedited surname process. The specific deadline for a given EA should be established based upon factors such as project complexity, analysis needed, and involvement of partners. The timeline should be conditioned on the timely provision of necessary information by partners.

Impediments to achieving the proposed targets: FWS EAs are typically longer than the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) recommended length of 10-15 pages (Forty Most Asked Questions Concerning CEQ's National Environmental Policy Act Regulations, 46 Fed. Reg. 18,026, 18,037, Question and Answer 36a (Mar. 23, 1981)). This increased length is due to the inclusion of information and analysis that have been added in response to court cases and additional guidance from CEQ since 1981. FWS staff often include additional analysis as a result of concerns that the NEPA document may be legally challenged on inadequate or insufficient analysis.

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Response to Section 4(c)(2) of Secretary's Order 3355 – Additional NEPA-Streamlining Review.

Recommendations for actions to streamline the NEPA process: FWS recommends the following tasks to streamline the NEPA process.

Guidance

- FWS should work with CEQ and the Department to develop additional guidance for the preparation of EAs and pair such guidance with adequate training of FWS staff. Such guidance and training should be established prior to implementing target page and time limitations.
- FWS should confer with CEQ regarding pursuing a regulatory solution to define the appropriate scope of analysis for NEPA documents.

Process

- FWS should work with the Department to reconsider the recent decision to require Solicitor review and surname of Categorical Exclusions (CatEx) in the Federal Register clearance process.
- FWS could incorporate an interagency review process similar to that used for projects covered by the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act's - Section 41 (FAST-41), in order to increase communication and coordination between Federal agencies.
- FWS should work with the Department to develop streamlining measures for the Federal Register clearance process to reduce it from 2-3 months to 30 days.
- FWS will develop a multidisciplinary NEPA team with representatives from Ecological Services, National Wildlife Refuge System, Migratory Bird Management, Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration, and Fish and Aquatic Conservation to ensure consistency across the agency and to develop NEPA streamlining tools that could be used by all programs.
- FWS should promote early engagement by FWS staff in NEPA reviews, especially for priority projects. This would allow staff to identify and address relevant FWS authorities as the project is being designed, where appropriate.

Actions

- FWS should develop tools such as EA templates to provide a consistent and streamlined approach to NEPA analysis and preparation.
- FWS should conduct a review of CatExs to identify which are being used, which need to be updated, and to identify the need for new CatExs.
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- FWS should enhance public-facing websites and online tools to integrate them more fully into project review and automate more routine activities.

FWS identified impediments and recommendations relating to Section 4d(2) of Secretary's Order 3355 – Impediments to Efficient and Effective Reviews, Actions that Could be Taken by CEQ, and Candidates for the "One Federal Decision" Process.

Actions that could be taken by CEQ to facilitate a review of major infrastructure projects: FWS recommends that CEQ lead an Interagency Working Group (IWG) comprised of NEPA practitioners to review existing CEQ regulations with the objective of updating and clarifying those regulations to ensure effective coordination with agencies. This should include the issuance of additional guidance, if necessary, to simplify and accelerate the NEPA process. In addition, the NEPA IWG should focus on E.O. 13807 to expedite interagency collaboration for infrastructure projects.

Major infrastructure projects that could be candidates for the "One Federal Decision" process: FWS does not have pending proposals for major infrastructure projects, as defined in E.O. 13807

that could be candidates for the "One Federal Decision" process. FWS is usually a cooperating or participating agency, and rarely the lead bureau for major infrastructure projects.

IV. Additional Comments on Secretary's Order 3355

Timing. As stated in the S.O. Section 4(a)(2), "…each bureau shall have a target to complete each Final EIS for which it is the lead agency within 1 year from issuance of a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS."

Per the Secretarial Order, FWS will make every effort to complete EISs in one year from the issuance of a NOI. Actions that qualify for an EIS often involve multiple partners, several authorities, are complex, and require a considerable amount of public scoping. In meeting the one year target, there may be impacts to the amount of time allotted to public participation and our ability to coordinate with external partners. For example, many actions conducted by the FWS are applicant-driven and dependent upon receipt of materials from non-Federal partners. FWS is supportive of using a pause or "stop-the-clock" mechanism similar to the mechanism used in the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) Title 41 to allow for processing steps beyond bureau control, such as receiving required information from applicants, which may extend the target deadline. The FWS agrees that establishing an initial timeline by the lead bureau is appropriate. FWS can assist with identification of potential delays and submitting any needed requests for extensions through the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, per the guidance in S.O. 3355.

From: Griffin, Toni
To: Fields, Vanessa
Subject: Re: so 3355
Date: Tuesday, January 9, 2018 10:11:06 AM
Attachments: FWS Response to SO 3355 signed.pdf

Good Morning to you!

Sorry, I totally forgot to follow up on that. Thanks for the reminder…

Toni Griffin
Landscape Architect / Planning Team Leader
NWRS, Region 6, Branch of Refuge Planning
134 Union Blvd.
Lakewood, CO 80228
Ph: 303-236-4378
Telework: Tuesday, Friday

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>
> Thank you!
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> --
> Vanessa Fields
> Invasive Species Ecologist
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United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Washington, D.C. 20240

DEC 1 1 2017

In Reply Refer To:
FWS/AES/DER/BNC/066735

Memorandum

To: Deputy Secretary

Through: Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks

From: Principal Deputy Director

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THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON

ORDER NO. 3355

Subject: Streamlining National Environmental Policy Act Reviews and Implementation of Executive Order 13807, "Establishing Discipline and Accountability in the Environmental Review and Permitting Process for Infrastructure Projects"

Sec. 1 **Purpose**. This Order is intended to: 1) immediately implement certain improvements to National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) reviews conducted by the Department of the Interior (Department); 2) begin assessment of additional such opportunities; and 3) begin implementation of Executive Order 13807 of August 15, 2017, "Establishing Discipline and Accountability in the Environmental Review and Permitting Process for Infrastructure Projects" (E.O. 13807).

Sec. 2 **Authorities**. This Order is issued under the authority of section 2 of Reorganization Plan No. 3 of 1950 (64 Stat. 1262), as amended. Other statutory authorities for this Order include, but are not limited to, NEPA, 42 U.S.C. 4321-4347.

Sec. 3 **Background**. The Department has broad responsibilities to manage Federal lands and resources for the public's benefit. The NEPA applies to the execution of many of the Department's responsibilities with the goal of ensuring that information regarding environmental impacts is available to decisionmakers and the public before decisions are made. The NEPA accomplishes this goal by requiring Federal agencies to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment.

Both the Department and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) have issued regulations to implement NEPA. Because the purpose of NEPA's requirements is not the generation of paperwork, but the adoption of sound decisions based on an informed understanding of environmental consequences, the regulations encourage agencies to: 1) focus on issues that truly matter rather than amassing unnecessary detail; 2) reduce paperwork, including by setting appropriate page limits; 3) discuss briefly issues that are not significant; and 4) prepare analytic (rather than encyclopedic) documents, among other measures.

In recognition of the impediments to efficient development of public and private projects that can be created by needlessly complex NEPA analysis, I am issuing this Order to enhance and modernize the Department's NEPA processes, with immediate focus on bringing even greater discipline to the documentation of the Department's analyses and identifying opportunities to further increase efficiencies.

This NEPA-streamlining effort dovetails with E.O. 13807. Among other requirements, E.O. 13807 requires CEQ to take actions to enhance and modernize the Federal environmental review process and to form an inter-agency working group to identify agency-specific

impediments to efficient and effective reviews for covered infrastructure projects. This Order begins implementation of E.O. 13807 in the context of the Department's overall effort to streamline the NEPA process.

Sec. 4 **Directives**.

a. Setting Page and Timing Limitations for Environmental Impact Statements.

(1) To implement the longstanding directives in 43 C.F.R. 46.405, and in 40 C.F.R. 1500.4 and 1502.7, all EISs 1) for which a bureau is the lead agency and 2) that have not reached the drafting stage shall not be more than 150 pages or 300 pages for unusually complex projects, excluding appendices. Approval of the Assistant Secretary with responsibility for the matter, in coordination with the Solicitor, is required to produce an EIS exceeding the above stated page limitations. In instances of EISs prepared with bureaus serving as co-leads, each responsible Assistant Secretary shall approve any deviations from this policy. To meet the page limitations, each preparer should focus on various techniques such as tiering or incorporation by reference.

(2) To ensure timely completion of EISs, and consistent with the timelines established for major infrastructure projects in E.O. 13807, each bureau shall have a target to complete each Final EIS for which it is the lead agency within 1 year from the issuance of a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS. The initial timeline must be developed by the lead bureau before issuing the NOI in accordance with 43 C.F.R. 46.240, taking into account all relevant timing factors listed therein, including any constraints required by cooperating agencies. An updated timeline should be prepared as needed during the development of the EIS (e.g., at the completion of scoping or if additional time is provided for public comment). Timelines exceeding the target by more than 3 months must be approved by the Assistant Secretary with responsibility for the matter. In instances of EISs prepared with bureaus serving as co-leads, each responsible Assistant Secretary must approve any deviations from this policy.

b. Setting Target Page and Timing Limitations for the Preparation of Environmental Assessments. Within 30 days, each bureau head shall provide to the Deputy Secretary through its supervising Assistant Secretary a proposal for target page limitations and time deadlines for the preparation of environmental assessments. Any common impediments to achieving the proposed targets should also be identified. In developing its proposal, each bureau should consider guidance from CEQ on the page length of environmental assessments. (Forty Most Asked Questions Concerning CEQ's National Environmental Policy Act Regulations, 46 Fed. Reg. 18,026, 18,037, Question and Answer 36a. (Mar. 23, 1981)).

c. Additional NEPA-Streamlining Review.

(1) The Deputy Secretary will coordinate a review of the Department's NEPA procedures to identify additional ways to streamline the completion of NEPA responsibilities. The review will include, but is not limited to, the following areas:

(a) bureau/office NEPA regulations, policies, guidance, and processes to identify: 1) impediments to efficient and effective reviews; 2) best practices and whether they can be implemented more widely; and 3) whether the Department should consider establishing additional categorical exclusions or revising current ones;

(b) requirements and process improvements under Title 41 of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, 42 U.S.C. 4370m-1(c)(1)(D), to determine whether any best practices can be broadly applied, including to projects beyond the terms of the FAST Act;

(c) requirements and process improvements required by E.O. 13807, to determine whether any best practices can be broadly applied, including to any projects beyond the terms of E.O 13807; and

(d) CEQ NEPA regulations and guidance to assess whether to recommend changes to facilitate agency processes.

(2) Within 30 days of the effective date of this Order, each Assistant Secretary, in coordination with bureau heads, should provide recommendations for actions to streamline the NEPA process to include potential regulatory revisions, development of revised or additional categorical exclusions, revised or new guidance or policies, and recommendations on streamlining the surnaming process.

d. Implementation of E.O. 13807. The Deputy Secretary will also coordinate implementation of E.O. 13807.

(1) In order to begin implementation of E.O. 13807, each Assistant Secretary, in coordination with the bureau heads, is hereby directed to identify:

(a) potential impediments to efficient and effective reviews for infrastructure and develop an action plan to address such impediments as a subset of the review required in Sec. 4c(1)(a) above;

(b) potential actions that could be taken by CEQ to facilitate a review of major infrastructure projects, as a subset of the review required in Sec. 4c(1)(d) above; and

(c) pending proposals for major infrastructure projects, as defined in E.O. 13807 and that are not yet the subject of a NOI issued by the Department, that could be candidates for the "One Federal Decision" process.

(2) Within 30 days of the effective date of this Order, each Assistant Secretary, in coordination with the bureau heads, should provide the information requested in Sec. 4d(1)(a)-(c) above.

Sec. 5 **Implementation**. The Deputy Secretary is responsible for implementing all aspects of this Order, in coordination with the Solicitor and the Assistant Secretaries.

Sec. 6 **Effect of the Order**. This Order is intended to improve the internal management of the Department. This Order and any resulting report or recommendations are not intended to, and do not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity by a party against the United States, its departments, agencies, instrumentalities or entities, its officer or employees, or any other person. To the extent there is any inconsistency between the provisions of this Order and any Federal laws or regulations, the laws or regulations will control.

Sec. 7 **Expiration Date**. This Order is effective immediately and will remain in effect until it is amended, superseded, or revoked, whichever occurs first.

Deputy Secretary

Date: AUG 31 2017

From:	Fields, Vanessa
To:	Amy Lisk; Bernardo Garza; Beverly Skinner; Brent Woodger; Dean Vaughan; Karen Shoemaker; Kelly Hogan; Kevin Shinn; Marlin McDonald; Matthew McCollister; Mike Koole; Kent Sundseth
Subject:	Alternatives Workshop prep and SO 3355
Date:	Tuesday, January 9, 2018 12:00:30 PM
Attachments:	FWS Response to SO 3355 signed.pdf SO_3355.pdf

Hello NBRC Planning Team!

You should all receive an email and see a google calendar invite for the conference call to prepare for the Alternatives Workshop. If something comes up and we need to reschedule, please let Bernardo or I know.

Bernardo is sill working on whether or not we will reschedule the workshop - he will let everyone know ASAP.

I have also attached Secretarial Order 3355 and the FWS response (so far). This is just for your awareness. We do not know yet exactly how this will impact our project, but we will keep you in the loop and do everything we can to be proactive.

Thanks!

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Ryan Moehring
To: Vanessa Fields; Bernardo Garza
Subject: RE: draft NBRC Public Engagement and Communications Strategy
Date: Wednesday, January 10, 2018 9:39:52 AM

Hi Vanessa,

Thanks for sharing. I think this is a good first draft. I look forward to our discussion today during which I hope to learn more about the thinking behind some of these items and how we advance them.

Do we have a call-in number for today's conference call? I don't see one on the meeting invite.

Thanks!
Ryan

Ryan Moehring
Public Affairs
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mountain-Prairie Region
303-236-0345

From: Fields, Vanessa [mailto:vanessa_fields@fws.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, January 03, 2018 8:51 AM
To: Bernardo Garza; Ryan Moehring
Subject: draft NBRC Public Engagement and Communications Strategy

Good morning!

Please see my first attempt at a public engagement/communications strategy. I purposefully kept this short and almost an 'outline' format because I didn't want to get too far down the road anywhere we aren't actually going to go. Much of this, if it is what we want to do, would need a lot more development and details.

As background, I used materials from a training Bernardo and I went to years ago by the Institute for Participatory Management and Planning (https://consentbuilding.com/). It is based on years of research looking at what made for successfully implemented government projects. It is based on the principle of 'informed consent' - in our society even very small groups have the ability to exercise their veto power - informed consent is "the grudging willingness of opponents to go along with a course of action that they actually are opposed to".

I followed their recommended process of identifying which of their 15 objectives most strongly apply to our project (see attachement for full list). Identifying the "Potentially Affected Interests" and then linking our objectives to strategies most likely to be effective. The good news is that many of the techniques we are using or planning to use, fit well with the objectives. I did include a few other techniques for us to consider that complement the more 'typical' techniques.

All of this is, of course, just a first draft. I am completely open to any and all changes.

Can we schedule a time either Thursday or Friday to discuss this? I am very open those two days except Friday before 9:30am.

Happy New Year!

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
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406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Ryan Moehring; Bernardo Garza
Subject: Re: draft NBRC Public Engagement and Communications Strategy
Date: Wednesday, January 10, 2018 12:13:00 PM

I added conf call # to invite - sorry I missed it before - looking forward to talking today!

On Wed, Jan 10, 2018 at 9:39 AM, Ryan Moehring <ryan_moehring@fws.gov> wrote:

> Hi Vanessa,
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From: Sundseth, Kent
To: Fields, Vanessa
Subject: Re: Alternatives Workshop prep and SO 3355
Date: Wednesday, January 10, 2018 2:57:11 PM

Hi Vanessa,

Thank you for the information regarding the upcoming planning meeting for the Alternatives Workshop. I am looking forward to learning more when I arrive at NBR early next week. If you feel there is additional background information that may helpful to me prior to the teleconference, please don't hesitate to send it my. I want to keep my elementary questions to a minimum if possible!

Thanks again and I look forward to meeting you.

Kent

On Tue, Jan 9, 2018 at 1:00 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

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--
Kent Sundseth
Refuge Manager/Project Leader
Tewaukon National Wildlife Refuge/Wetland Management District
ph. 701 724-3598 ext. 2

fax 701 724-3683

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Sundseth, Kent
Cc: Bernardo Garza
Subject: Re: Alternatives Workshop prep and SO 3355
Date: Wednesday, January 10, 2018 3:17:08 PM

Hi Kent and welcome to the NBRC planning process!

We will be sending out materials before the call - so stay tuned! Bernardo Garza and I are the co-leads for this plan - I know you will have a lot that you are trying to get up to speed on, but if you had time early next week to chat with us, we would appreciate the opportunity to introduce ourselves and give you the crash course on where we are with this process. Is there a time Tuesday or Wednesday that would work? I am open except 9-10am Wednesday.

Thanks! And travel safe on your way over here to Montana!

On Wed, Jan 10, 2018 at 2:57 PM, Sundseth, Kent <kent_sundseth@fws.gov> wrote:

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From: Sundseth, Kent
To: Fields, Vanessa
Cc: Bernardo Garza
Subject: Re: Alternatives Workshop prep and SO 3355
Date: Wednesday, January 10, 2018 3:36:11 PM

Hi Vanessa,

I will be driving most of the day Tuesday, and will need the afternoon to get oriented. How about Wednesday afternoon? Would 1:00 local time work? Just let me know and I'll plan accordingly. Thanks!

Kent

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From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Sundseth, Kent; Bernardo Garza
Subject: Re: Alternatives Workshop prep and SO 3355
Date: Wednesday, January 10, 2018 4:42:01 PM

I put it on the google calendar in "pencil" (which, of course, is only in my mind since technology doesn't have that option!). If we need to reschedule once you are there and a little settled, no problem.

On Wed, Jan 10, 2018 at 3:36 PM, Sundseth, Kent <kent_sundseth@fws.gov> wrote:

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From: Sundseth, Kent
To: Fields, Vanessa
Subject: Re: Alternatives Workshop prep and SO 3355
Date: Thursday, January 11, 2018 8:03:59 AM

Sounds good Vanessa. If I encounter travel problems or feel like I'm still scrambling on Wednesday, I will let you know. Otherwise we can meet as planned. Thanks again for offering to meet!

On Wed, Jan 10, 2018 at 5:42 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

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From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Will Meeks
Subject: Bison Range discussion - questions
Date: Thursday, January 11, 2018 8:28:19 AM

Good morning Will-

I have a couple of (hopefully) quick questions for you for our discussion next week on the Bison Range CCP Communications/Public Engagement strategy-

1 - Would it be OK to invite Kent to join us on the phone?

2 - I would like to come into the RO for this discussion, if that is would be OK? Just a quick trip coming in Wed afternoon and heading out Thur evening. That would also give Bernardo and I time on Thursday afternoon to work on incorporating what we discussed in the morning into the plan.

Thanks!

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Will Meeks
To: Vanessa Fields
Subject: RE: Bison Range discussion - questions
Date: Thursday, January 11, 2018 9:16:26 AM

Yes and yes. Can you check with Betsy Matten to make sure it gets on my calendar while you are here? Thank you.

Will Meeks
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mountain-Prairie Region
Assistant Regional Director
National Wildlife Refuge System
303-236-4303 (office)
720-541-0310 (cell)

From: Fields, Vanessa [mailto:vanessa_fields@fws.gov]
Sent: Thursday, January 11, 2018 8:28 AM
To: Will Meeks <will_meeks@fws.gov>
Subject: Bison Range discussion - questions

Good morning Will-

I have a couple of (hopefully) quick questions for you for our discussion next week on the Bison Range CCP Communications/Public Engagement strategy-

1 - Would it be OK to invite Kent to join us on the phone?

2 - I would like to come into the RO for this discussion, if that is would be OK? Just a quick trip coming in Wed afternoon and heading out Thur evening. That would also give Bernardo and I time on Thursday afternoon to work on incorporating what we discussed in the morning into the plan.

Thanks!

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Will Meeks
Cc: Betsy Matten
Subject: Re: Bison Range discussion - questions
Date: Thursday, January 11, 2018 9:29:58 AM

Thanks - I have coordinated with Betsy and it is on your schedule - 10am to noon on Thursday, the 18th. See you next week!

On Thu, Jan 11, 2018 at 9:16 AM, Will Meeks <will_meeks@fws.gov> wrote:

> Yes and yes. Can you check with Betsy Matten to make sure it gets on my calendar while you are here? Thank you.
>
> Will Meeks
>
> U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
>
> Mountain-Prairie Region
>
> Assistant Regional Director
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> 303-236-4303 (office)
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>
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> **Sent:** Thursday, January 11, 2018 8:28 AM
> **To:** Will Meeks <will_meeks@fws.gov>
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> Good morning Will-
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--
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Division of Science Resources
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From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Kent Sundseth
Cc: Bernardo Garza
Subject: Fwd: NBR Public engagement and communications
Date: Thursday, January 11, 2018 9:50:07 AM

Kent-

We would also like to invite you to join a discussion next week with Will about our Communications and Public Engagement plan for the NBRC CCP (see string below). We can give you more background when Bernardo and I chat with you next Wednesday, but we would also like to get this on your calendar if you are available.

Thanks!
---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Will Meeks** <will_meeks@fws.gov>
Date: Tue, Dec 19, 2017 at 4:06 PM
Subject: Re: NBR Public engagement and communications
To: "Fields, Vanessa" <vanessa_fields@fws.gov>
Cc: Maureen Gallagher <maureen_gallagher@fws.gov>, Ryan Moehring <ryan_moehring@fws.gov>, Bernardo Garza <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>, Kelly Hogan <kelly_hogan@fws.gov>

Thanks for the note Vanessa. I think it's a great idea and have it on my calendar. I think blocking up to two hours (just to be safe) may be prudent.

Enjoy the holidays. Take care.

Will Meeks
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mountain-Prairie Region
Assistant Regional Director
National Wildlife Refuge System
303-236-4303(w)
720-541-0310 (c)

> On Dec 19, 2017, at 1:22 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> Will-
>
> We would like to have a meeting to discuss our public engagement and overall communications strategy for the Bison Range Complex CCP. Bernardo and I have had some preliminary discussions with Maureen and Ryan to do a bit of brainstorming on how we want to approach this for the NBR. Maureen suggested that Bernardo, Ryan and I sketch out some ideas and schedule some time to present these ideas to both of you and get some feedback.
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and hopefully as effective as possible with our engagement of the public.
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> I have talked with Betsy to find some time on your schedule for Thursday, January 18th. We will come with some ideas for you to consider. We would like to then have an informal discussion about whether we are on the right track and how to proceed, before we formalize this and develop the final version.
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> If that all sounds good, we will look forward to talking with you about this on the 18th. If you have any questions beforehand, please let Bernardo, Ryan or myself know.
>
> Thanks and Happy Holidays!
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From: Sundseth, Kent
To: Fields, Vanessa
Subject: Re: NBR Public engagement and communications
Date: Thursday, January 11, 2018 9:55:00 AM

Vanessa,

Absolutely. I would be very interested in attending. When you have a time nailed down, please let me know and I will get it on my calendar. Thanks for the heads up!

Kent

On Thu, Jan 11, 2018 at 10:50 AM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> Kent-
>
> We would also like to invite you to join a discussion next week with Will about our Communications and Public Engagement plan for the NBRC CCP (see string below). We can give you more background when Bernardo and I chat with you next Wednesday, but we would also like to get this on your calendar if you are available.
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> From: **Will Meeks** <will_meeks@fws.gov>
> Date: Tue, Dec 19, 2017 at 4:06 PM
> Subject: Re: NBR Public engagement and communications
> To: "Fields, Vanessa" <vanessa_fields@fws.gov>
> Cc: Maureen Gallagher <maureen_gallagher@fws.gov>, Ryan Moehring <ryan_moehring@fws.gov>, Bernardo Garza <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>, Kelly Hogan <kelly_hogan@fws.gov>
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> Will Meeks
> U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
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--
Kent Sundseth
Refuge Manager/Project Leader
Tewaukon National Wildlife Refuge/Wetland Management District
ph. 701 724-3598 ext. 2

fax 701 724-3683

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Brian Upton; Dale Becker; David Redhorse; Gale Decker; Jennifer Ekberg; Kelly Hogan; Kent Sundseth; Kevin Shinn; Neil Anderson; Vanessa Fields; Will Meeks; Mary Danno; Diane Emmons
Subject:	National Bison Range Complex Alternatives Development Workshop - Change of Dates
Date:	Thursday, January 11, 2018 10:27:04 AM

Folks,

I finally heard from all of you regarding the dates for the upcoming Alternatives Development Workshop for the comprehensive conservation plans for the National Bison Range Complex.

Based on my conversations with you, we will go ahead and move the workshop dates from February 6-8, to February 13-15, 2018.

The venue of the workshop remains unchanged: Red Lion Ridgewater Inn in Polson, MT.

I ask you to please inform of this change to all the members of your staffs or colleagues that were scheduled to participate.

Do let me know if you have any questions.

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Brian Upton; Dale Becker; David Redhorse; Gale Decker; Jennifer Ekberg; Kelly Hogan; Kent Sundseth; Kevin Shinn; Neil Anderson; Vanessa Fields; Will Meeks; Mary Danno; Diane Emmons
Subject:	National Bison Range Complex Alternatives Development Workshop - Change of Dates
Date:	Thursday, January 11, 2018 10:27:08 AM

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Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From:	Brian Upton
To:	Garza, Bernardo
Subject:	RE: National Bison Range Complex Alternatives Development Workshop - Change of Dates
Date:	Thursday, January 11, 2018 10:31:52 AM

Thank you Bernardo, for your time and effort in accommodating Dale/CSKT. We appreciate it.

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Thursday, January 11, 2018 10:27 AM
To: Brian Upton; Dale Becker; David Redhorse; Gale Decker; Jennifer Ekberg; Kelly Hogan; Kent Sundseth; Kevin Shinn; Neil Anderson; Vanessa Fields; Will Meeks; Mary Danno; Diane Emmons
Subject: National Bison Range Complex Alternatives Development Workshop - Change of Dates

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Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Brian Upton
Subject: Re: National Bison Range Complex Alternatives Development Workshop - Change of Dates
Date: Thursday, January 11, 2018 10:36:32 AM

You are welcome. We appreciate and need your participation in the planning process.

On Thu, Jan 11, 2018 at 10:31 AM, Brian Upton <Brian.Upton@cskt.org> wrote:

> Thank you Bernardo, for your time and effort in accommodating Dale/CSKT. We appreciate it.
>
> **From:** Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
> **Sent:** Thursday, January 11, 2018 10:27 AM
> **To:** Brian Upton; Dale Becker; David Redhorse; Gale Decker; Jennifer Ekberg; Kelly Hogan; Kent Sundseth; Kevin Shinn; Neil Anderson; Vanessa Fields; Will Meeks; Mary Danno; Diane Emmons
> **Subject:** National Bison Range Complex Alternatives Development Workshop - Change of Dates
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Bernardo Garza

Planning Team Leader

Branch of Planning and Policy

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region

Office (303) 236-4377

Fax (303) 236-4792

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Google Calendar on behalf of Vanessa Fields
To: bernardo_garza@fws.gov; kent_sundseth@fws.gov; kevin_shinn@fws.gov; brent_woodger@fws.gov; dean_vaughan@fws.gov; mary_danno@fws.gov; karen_shoemaker@fws.gov; mike_koole@fws.gov; matthew_mccollister@fws.gov; diane_emmons@fws.gov; beverly_skinner@fws.gov; marlin_mcdonald@fws.gov; amy_lisk@fws.gov
Subject: NBRC CCP Alternatives Workshop
Start: Wednesday, March 7, 2018 12:00:00 AM
End: Saturday, March 10, 2018 12:00:00 AM
Location: Red Lion Inn, Polson, MT
Attachments: invite.ics

This event has been changed.

more details » <https://www.google.com/calendar/event?
action=VIEW&eid=MmkwdjNzb2JxaXBsb3E1a292Ym05cmNoZG4gYmVybmFyZG9fZ2FyemFAZndzLmdvdg&tok=MjIjdmFuZXNzYV9maWVsZHNAZndzLmdvdjNjNWI0YTIyM2Y3YTFkNjljYTViNzQ5NGJiNGM5N2E2MGYwOTY0YmQ&ctz=America/Denver&hl=en>

NBRC CCP Alternatives Workshop

Changed: We will have the Alternatives Workshop for the National Bison Range Complex CCP during these three days (rescheduled from previous dates). Agenda, with specific times and details, will be forthcoming soon.
When
Tue Feb 13 – Thu Feb 15, 2018
Where
Red Lion Inn, Polson, MT (map <https://maps.google.com/maps?q=Red+Lion+Inn,+Polson,+MT&hl=en>)
Video call
https://plus.google.com/hangouts/_/doi.gov/vanessa-fields <https://plus.google.com/hangouts/_/doi.gov/vanessa-fields?hceid=dmFuZXNzYV9maWVsZHNAZndzLmdvdg.2i0v3sobqiploq5kovbm9rchdn>
Calendar
bernardo_garza@fws.gov
Who
• vanessa_fields@fws.gov
- organizer
• kent_sundseth@fws.gov
• kevin_shinn@fws.gov
• brent_woodger@fws.gov
• dean_vaughan@fws.gov
• mary_danno@fws.gov
• karen_shoemaker@fws.gov
• mike_koole@fws.gov
• matthew_mccollister@fws.gov
• diane_emmons@fws.gov
• beverly_skinner@fws.gov
• marlin_mcdonald@fws.gov
• amy_lisk@fws.gov
• bernardo_garza@fws.gov

Going?
Yes <https://www.google.com/calendar/event?
action=RESPOND&eid=MmkwdjNzb2JxaXBsb3E1a292Ym05cmNoZG4gYmVybmFyZG9fZ2FyemFAZndzLmdvdg&rst=1&tok=MjIjdmFuZXNzYV9maWVsZHNAZndzLmdvdjNjNWI0YTIyM2Y3YTFkNjljYTViNzQ5NGJiNGM5N2E2MGYwOTY0YmQ&ctz=America/Denver&hl=en>
-
Maybe <https://www.google.com/calendar/event?
action=RESPOND&eid=MmkwdjNzb2JxaXBsb3E1a292Ym05cmNoZG4gYmVybmFyZG9fZ2FyemFAZndzLmdvdg&rst=3&tok=MjIjdmFuZXNzYV9maWVsZHNAZndzLmdvdjNjNWI0YTIyM2Y3YTFkNjljYTViNzQ5NGJiNGM5N2E2MGYwOTY0YmQ&ctz=America/Denver&hl=en>
-
No <https://www.google.com/calendar/event?
action=RESPOND&eid=MmkwdjNzb2JxaXBsb3E1a292Ym05cmNoZG4gYmVybmFyZG9fZ2FyemFAZndzLmdvdg&rst=2&tok=MjIjdmFuZXNzYV9maWVsZHNAZndzLmdvdjNjNWI0YTIyM2Y3YTFkNjljYTViNzQ5NGJiNGM5N2E2MGYwOTY0YmQ&ctz=America/Denver&hl=en>
more options » <https://www.google.com/calendar/event?
action=VIEW&eid=MmkwdjNzb2JxaXBsb3E1a292Ym05cmNoZG4gYmVybmFyZG9fZ2FyemFAZndzLmdvdg&tok=MjIjdmFuZXNzYV9maWVsZHNAZndzLmdvdjNjNWI0YTIyM2Y3YTFkNjljYTViNzQ5NGJiNGM5N2E2MGYwOTY0YmQ&ctz=America/Denver&hl=en>

Invitation from Google Calendar <https://www.google.com/calendar/>

You are receiving this email at the account bernardo_garza@fws.gov because you are subscribed for updated invitations on calendar bernardo_garza@fws.gov.

To stop receiving these emails, please log in to https://www.google.com/calendar/ and change your notification settings for this calendar.

Forwarding this invitation could allow any recipient to modify your RSVP response. Learn More <https://support.google.com/calendar/answer/37135#forwarding> .

From: Gallagher, Maureen
To: Fields, Vanessa
Subject: Re: NBR Public engagement and communications
Date: Thursday, January 11, 2018 3:57:23 PM

Sorry for the delayed response. Yes invite Kent. I agree with being old school. Our issue is that planning may already be over their travel cap. I am still awaiting the numbers. That said, I think it important to save our travel for public and cooperating agencies contacts. Sorry.

Maureen Gallagher
Deputy Assistant Regional Director
Refuges and Partners for Fish and Wildlife
Mountain Prairie Region
134 Union Blvd
Lakewood, CO
303/236/4304 o
720/772/0424 c
303/236/4792 fax

On Mon, Jan 8, 2018 at 12:09 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> Maureen-
>
> Happy New Year!
>
> I have a couple of questions/requests for you regarding our meeting next week to discuss the NBRC public engagement and communications strategy-
>
> -I was wondering if I could possibly come in to Denver for that meeting? I would propose flying in Wed afternoon and heading back Thursday evening. I guess I have some old-school in me and really appreciate being able to sit down face-to-face with folks, and since I haven't been able to do that with Will and you on this topic, I thought this could be a good opportunity. I could also use that afternoon then with Bernardo and Ryan to build on our morning conversation and possibly hash out the plan that same day. I realize we are being sensitive to our travel budgets, so if it won't work, I completely understand.
>
> -Also, would it be a good idea to invite Kent Sundseth to call into our meeting as well?
>
> Thanks!
>
> ---------- Forwarded message ----------
> From: **Fields, Vanessa** <vanessa_fields@fws.gov>
> Date: Tue, Dec 19, 2017 at 1:21 PM
> Subject: NBR Public engagement and communications
> To: Will Meeks <will_meeks@fws.gov>
> Cc: Maureen Gallagher <maureen_gallagher@fws.gov>, Ryan Moehring <ryan_moehring@fws.gov>, Bernardo Garza <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>, Kelly Hogan <kelly_hogan@fws.gov>

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Thanks and Happy Holidays!

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From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Gallagher, Maureen
Subject: Re: NBR Public engagement and communications
Date: Thursday, January 11, 2018 4:41:41 PM

So I think I screwed up - I figured you were really busy so I also reached out to Will. He had said yes to coming in, but I will let him know I will be calling in instead - I just wanted to let you know I had that conversation with him in case it comes up. Sorry if I caused any problems with this request.

On Thu, Jan 11, 2018 at 3:57 PM, Gallagher, Maureen <maureen_gallagher@fws.gov> wrote:

> Sorry for the delayed response. Yes invite Kent. I agree with being old school. Our issue is that planning may already be over their travel cap. I am still awaiting the numbers. That said, I think it important to save our travel for public and cooperating agencies contacts. Sorry.
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> >
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> > From: **Fields, Vanessa** <vanessa_fields@fws.gov>

Date: Tue, Dec 19, 2017 at 1:21 PM
Subject: NBR Public engagement and communications
To: Will Meeks <will_meeks@fws.gov>
Cc: Maureen Gallagher <maureen_gallagher@fws.gov>, Ryan Moehring <ryan_moehring@fws.gov>, Bernardo Garza <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>, Kelly Hogan <kelly_hogan@fws.gov>

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Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404

406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
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From:	Fields, Vanessa
To:	Kent Sundseth
Cc:	Bernardo Garza
Subject:	NBR Public engagement strategy
Date:	Wednesday, January 17, 2018 11:03:16 AM
Attachments:	NBRC_PublicEngagementandCommunicationsPlan_011618.docx

---

Hi Kent-

We look forward to chatting with you this afternoon. I have attached a copy of the draft Public Engagement and Communications plan that we will be discussing tomorrow in our meeting with Will. I will be in Denver, so we could just call you. What would be the best number to reach you at tomorrow morning?

Thanks,

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
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National Bison Range Complex

Comprehensive Conservation Plans

DRAFT Public Engagement and Communications Plan

This Public Engagement and Communications Plan has been developed to support the timely completion and *successful implementation* of a Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the National Bison Range Complex.

Goals for this Plan:

Receive *and understand* what is communicated to us and have our communications received *and understood.* (#12,13)

Build bridges across the Service and our external partners (enhance everyone's ability to see this project from other perspectives). (#7,15)

Establish and maintain legitimacy and credibility of this CCP planning process. (#3,4,5,11)

Involvement: We will conduct a comprehensive stakeholder review with the specific purpose of identifying and engaging our key internal and external partners. We need to especially reach out to those who may be concerned or frustrated enough with our planning effort that they feel their only recourse is to block or otherwise stop the plan.

Internal
NBRC staff
FWS Leadership (DOI, FWS WO, Regional Director, Refuge Chief, Refuge Supervisor)
Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program
Ecological Services
Migratory Birds
Office of Law Enforcement
Division of Science Resources
Division of Conservation and Planning (WO)

Planning Team (Cooperating Agencies)
Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes
Lake County
Sanders County
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Bureau of Indian Affairs

Other Organizations
Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility
Blue Goose Alliance
Flathead Audubon Society
Headwaters Montana
Montana Conservation Voters
Montana Congressional Delegation
State Legislators
County Commissioners
Sierra Club
Defenders of Wildlife
Natural Resource Defense Council
Wildlife Conservation Society
Wilderness Society
Protect Public Land

Individual members of the Public

Public Engagement Strategies

Every strategy described below has been chosen because it is either required by law/policy or is particularly effective at addressing the goals identified above[1].

Planning Team (FWS staff): RO leadership, Planning staff and NBRC staff will be kept in the loop for every step of the process (see work plan) through workshops, monthly CCP calls, ad-hoc meetings, public meetings, and email.

Planning Team (Cooperating Agencies): Participate in workshops at each step of the process, review and provide input throughout.

In-reach: In-person briefings for ARD/RD, briefing statements (WO, DOI), internal reviews of documents

Federal Register: NOIs and NOAs will be used to inform the public of key steps in the process

Communications Plans: External Affairs will assist with developing formal media and outreach strategies at key steps (alternatives?, draft CCP/EIS/EA release, final CCP/EIS) in the process

Planning updates: Used to keep all those interested in the CCP process updated on how the project is progressing and what issues are coming up.

CCP Website: A tool for sharing any documents, updates, supporting materials or announcements. A powerful tool for creating transparency and building trust. One-way communication.

Public Meetings: Open houses

-Semi-informal, informational style meetings that allow for one-on-one exchanges, held at several locations in Complex

Public Meetings: Other

-One-on-one: If needed, individual outreach with key constituents (e.g. Congressional briefings, PEER?)
-Forum: If needed, forums are designed to hear different points of view expressed or to shed light on a subject, but no to make any decisions (e.g. bison management, visitor use, cultural heritage).

Working through existing groups: Many organizations have regular meetings with a program in which they like would like to feature a presentation on our CCP. Can be a way to establish a working relationship which allows their organization to play an important role as a two-way communication channel between the community and the project. Tribal consultation may apply here also.

Electronic Bulletin Board (Facebook?): Would like to develop another "two-way" communication tool – maybe Facebook or Facebook group? But is that accessible to enough people? Or a "Yahoo group"? or some kind of list-serve? Project Leader blog?

Visitor Center Engagement: Provide materials and training for Visitor Center staff at the Bison Range and Lost Trail to provide information, answer questions and receive comments from the visiting public or the local public that make a special trip? Have "office hours" for the PL or Managers?

[1]Institute for Participatory Management and Planning, https://consentbuilding.com/

Matrix of Engagement Strategy by CCP Planning Phase

	May-Sept 2017	Nov 2017	Dec 2017 – Apr 2018	May 2018-Apr 2019	Apr 2019-Jun 2020
Engagement Strategy	Preplannning and Scoping	Vision/ Goals	Alternatives	Draft CCP/EIS/EA	Final CCP/EIS
Planning Team: FWS					
Workshop	X	X	X	X	
Monthly CCP call		X	X	X	X
Ad hoc meetings	X	X	X	X	X
Planning Team: Coop. Agencies					
Workshops	X	X	X	X	
Review/Revise		X	X	X	
In-reach					
ARD/RD briefings			X	X	X
WO/DOI briefing statements			X	X	X
Federal Register					
NOI/NOA	X			X	X
EA Communication Plan					
Basic	X				
Full			X	X	X
Website					
Planning Updates	X		X	X	
Public Meetings					
Open houses	X		?	X	
Forum			X		
One-on-one			X	X	X
Existing Groups/Avenues					
Engage in their meetings			X	X	
Consultation			X	X	
E-board/Facebook?					
Updates/Questions/Notices			X	X	X
Visitor Center Engagement				X	X

From: Sundseth, Kent
To: Fields, Vanessa
Subject: Re: NBR Public engagement strategy
Date: Wednesday, January 17, 2018 11:23:35 AM

Hi Vanessa,

Please call me at 406 644-2211 ext. 204. I look forward to talking to you at 1:00. Thanks!

Kent

On Wed, Jan 17, 2018 at 12:03 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> Hi Kent-
>
> We look forward to chatting with you this afternoon. I have attached a copy of the draft Public Engagement and Communications plan that we will be discussing tomorrow in our meeting with Will. I will be in Denver, so we could just call you. What would be the best number to reach you at tomorrow morning?
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> Thanks,
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> Vanessa Fields
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> Division of Science Resources
> 922 Bootlegger Trail
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> 406-217-6473 (cell)

--
Kent Sundseth
Refuge Manager/Project Leader
Tewaukon National Wildlife Refuge/Wetland Management District
ph. 701 724-3598 ext. 2
fax 701 724-3683

From:	Fields, Vanessa
To:	Amy Lisk; Bernardo Garza; Beverly Skinner; Brent Woodger; Dean Vaughan; Karen Shoemaker; Kevin Shinn; Marlin McDonald; Matthew McCollister; Mike Koole; Kent Sundseth
Subject:	Alternatives Workshop agenda
Date:	Thursday, January 18, 2018 1:47:26 PM
Attachments:	NBRC_Alternatives Workshop Agenda DRAFT 1_5_18.docx

---

Good afternoon!

Please see the attached DRAFT agenda for the upcoming Alternatives Workshop. We are still planning on having our preparation call next Tuesday from 1-3pm (call in # is in the google calendar invite).

Sorry for a bit of a delay in getting this to you - we have had a wrinkle in scheduling the workshop. In order to have maximum participation, we are actively exploring whether or not we should move the workshop to a couple of weeks later. Kent will be reaching out to you to get feedback on your schedules. I am sure everyone knows how hard it is to coordinate this kind of meeting, we really appreciate your patience and understanding as we work to get this figured out.

If you have questions on this agenda before Tuesday, please let either Bernardo or me know.

Thanks,

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
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Comprehensive Conservation Plan
Alternatives Workshop Agenda

Purpose: To bring the NBRC CCP Planning Team together to collaboratively develop a viable set of alternative plans for the NBRC CCPs.

Intended Outcome: Range of Management Alternatives with written descriptions and a completed Alternatives Matrix.

Location: Red Lion Inn, 209 Ridgewater Drive, Polson, MT 59860

Dates: February 6-8, 2018 (may be rescheduled)

DAY 1

8:30 Welcome and Workshop Introduction

- Welcome the planning team.
- Give overview of the workshop (intent and outcome).
- Describe roles and responsibilities of workshop leaders, facilitation team, planning team.
- Introduce facilitation team, who will go over workshop logistics.

8:45 Team Connection

- Exercise designed to invigorate the attendees and prepare them for an interactive workshop.

9:00 Planning Process Reflection

- Recap of CCP planning process, including review of alternative development steps.
- Provide synopsis of the previous CCP attempt, including what was discovered last time and which ideas seemed to still have traction.
- Present the outcomes of the CCP planning steps completed to date and describe what happens next.
- Re-introduce CCP Vision and Goals agreed upon at last workshop, recognizing that they will be the foundation for developing the alternatives.

9:30 Birds Eye View of NBR Complex

- Projected USFWS approach to managing NBRC within a more comprehensive Refuge context
- Describe the importance of managing the NBRC units as one single complex, highlighting the major issues/ areas of focus for each unit.
- Discuss any relevant/ pertinent models/ studies

10:30 BREAK

11:00 CCP Goal Topic Area Generation

- Discuss list of suggested goal topic areas provided as read-ahead
- Determine if there are other topic areas that should be incorporated to achieve each CCP goal.
- Team consensus on final set of topic areas to include in the alternatives development process.

12:00 LUNCH

1:30 Current Complex Management Approach

- Assess current management approach as it relates to the CCP goals and specific topic areas
- Populate the No Action portion of the Alternatives Matrix with participant input
- Determine where there may be need for adjustment to the topic areas based on team discussion

3:00 BREAK

3:30 Management Alternative Concepts - Idea-sharing

- Provide a platform for participants to introduce alternative concepts. (This request will be made PRIOR to the workshop so participants have the option to prepare a brief alternative concept description.)
- This information will work toward getting the team to think about different concepts/ themes for alternatives.

4:30 Day 1 Review

- Highlight items covered and outcomes
- Team observations
- Look ahead to Day 2 activities

5:00 End of Day 1

Team Dinner (optional)

DAY 2

8:00 Morning Check in

- Exercise designed to energize the team and prepare them for a day of interaction

8:15 Day 2 Alignment

- Brief recap of Day 1 accomplishments
- Introduction of Day 2 focus

8:30 Management Alternatives Concept Development

- Small group discussion of possible concepts (refer to examples and presentations from Day 1)
- Small group introduction of strongest concepts with brief descriptions

9:30 Morning Stretch

- Wall Walk – Participant select the alternative concepts that they would like to see move forward.
- This activity is part of the **Morning Break**.

10:00 Management Alternatives Concept Review

- Team discusses the top tier of management alternatives concepts
- Fine-tune the descriptions of top tier management alternative concepts
- Obtain team consensus on management alternative concepts moving forward

11:00 Overview of Alternatives Development

- Re-introduce Alternatives Matrix, CCP goals, and specific topic areas
- Review the No Action Plan portion of the Alternatives Matrix (from Day 1 activity)
- Develop key components of CCP goal topic areas for inclusion into alternative concepts

12:00 LUNCH

1:30 Alternatives Development

- Small group activity to fill in the Alternatives Matrix for the alternatives
- Key components of CCP goal topic areas worksheets will be incorporated into the matrix input
- A checklist of items to consider when populating the matrix will be provided to encourage the development of well-rounded, distinguishable, goal-oriented alternatives.
- An **Afternoon Break** will be integrated into this activity

4:30 Day 2 Review

- Highlight workshop items covered and outcomes
- Team observations
- Look ahead to Day 3 activities

5:00 End of Day 2

Team Dinner (optional)

DAY 3

8:00 Morning Check in

- Exercise designed to energize the team and prepare them for a day of interaction

8:15 Day 3 Alignment

- Brief recap of Day 2 accomplishments
- Introduction of Day 3 focus

8:30 Alternatives Presentations

- Each Alternative will be introduced by a participant identified as the advocate for that alternative. They will walk the planning team through the Alternatives Matrix information.
- Planning Team will provide additional comments and suggestions for updating the matrix information.
- A checklist will be provided to encourage the development of well-rounded, distinguishable, goal-oriented alternatives.
- A **Morning Break** will be integrated into this exercise.

11:00 Alternatives Refinement

- Provide additional input to the alternatives presented for team consideration.

11:30 Team Lunch (optional)

1:00 Team Review of Alternatives Refinement

- Planning team will review and consider additional input and update the alternatives accordingly.

2:30 Workshop Reflection

- Review of items covered during the workshop
- Shared observations team activity
- Individual feedback on the workshop process, logistics, and outcome (short questionnaire)

3:30 Next Steps, Team Recognition, and Workshop Closing

4:00 Conclusion of Alternatives Workshop

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Vanessa Fields; Kent Sundseth
Subject:	Alternatives Workshop - Contacting the Coop Agencies - Update 1
Date:	Thursday, January 18, 2018 4:22:05 PM

Vanessa and Kent,

I called Brian Upton (CSKT), David Redhorse (BIA), Commissioner Magera (Sanders County), and the Red Lion Inn in Polson to ascertain whether we can reschedule the workshop again to either Feb. 27 - March 1, or March 6 - 8.

Brian Upton didn't answer, so I left him a message asking him to call me back. He hasn't yet.

David Redhorse said that either of the weeks proposed would work for him to participate.

Commissioner Magera said that Sanders County will be represented from now on by Pat Jamieson. So I called Pat and she said that either one of those two weeks would work for her.

The Red Lion Inn is currently available on either one of those two weeks. I told them I would contact them as soon as possible to confirm if we will move the workshop dates or not.

Please let me know what you find out about the NBRC staff and the folks that Vanessa will be calling.

Thanks

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Vanessa Fields; Kent Sundseth
Subject: Alternatives Workshop - Contacting the Coop Agencies - Update 2
Date: Friday, January 19, 2018 8:40:05 AM

Good morning,

I spoke with Brian Upton a couple of minutes ago and he told me that both of the weeks we are proposing work for him, although he would prefer Will's preferred week (March 6 - 8).

He spoke with Dale, who told him that both weeks would also work for him.

Brian just wants to check one more thing to make sure there are no scheduling conflicts, but told me that if I don't hear back from him or Dale, that it is OK to reschedule the alternatives workshop to either of the weeks we are proposing.

Any news from the NBRC staff ability to reschedule the workshop?

How about Lake County and MTFWP?

Thanks

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Bernardo Garza
Subject: Fwd: Proposed dates for CCP Alternatives Workshop
Date: Friday, January 19, 2018 9:37:38 AM

I can follow up and see if Beverly absolutely can't make it the week of March 5th?
---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Shinn, Kevin** <kevin_shinn@fws.gov>
Date: Fri, Jan 19, 2018 at 8:07 AM
Subject: Re: Proposed dates for CCP Alternatives Workshop
To: "Sundseth, Kent" <kent_sundseth@fws.gov>
Cc: Amy Lisk <amy_lisk@fws.gov>, Beverly <beverly_skinner@fws.gov>, Brent <brent_woodger@fws.gov>, Dean Vaughan <dean_vaughan@fws.gov>, Karen Shoemaker <karen_shoemaker@fws.gov>, Marlin McDonald <marlin_mcdonald@fws.gov>, Mike Koole <mike_koole@fws.gov>, "Fields, Vanessa" <vanessa_fields@fws.gov>

Kent,

I am not sure why we are changing the dates again, it took some date switching to set up our current 13-15 dates. I hope we can still make the current dates work. It is important to have Beverly at our workshop, so I would suggest February 27-March 1 if we have to move it.

I could make February 27 and 28, but on March 1 I am currently scheduled for Federal Court.

On Thu, Jan 18, 2018 at 2:55 PM, Sundseth, Kent <kent_sundseth@fws.gov> wrote:

> Folks,
>
> The planning team for the NBR/Lost Trail CCP process is working to determine final dates for the Alternatives Workshop in Polson, MT. Input from the staff is very valuable they would like as many of you to participate as possible. The dates being proposed are:
>
> February 27 - March 1
> March 6 - 8
>
> This is a high priority, so even if your schedule doesn't allow you to attend all three days, you should consider attending when you can. Please let me know as soon as possible if you have a preference for either of these three day windows, and I will pass that on. Just let me know if we have any questions. Thanks!
>
> Kent
>
> --
> Kent Sundseth
> Acting Project Leader
> National Bison Range Complex
> ph. 406 644-2211 ext. 204
> Cell 701 680-7592

--
Kevin J. Shinn
Manager/Federal Wildlife Officer
Lost Trail NWR/NW Montana WMD
406-858-2216 Office
406-260-5192 cell

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
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406-217-6473 (cell)

From:	Fields, Vanessa
To:	Garza, Bernardo
Cc:	Kent Sundseth
Subject:	Re: Alternatives Workshop - Contacting the Coop Agencies - Update 2
Date:	Friday, January 19, 2018 9:46:14 AM

I just spoke to the administrative person at Lake County. Gale Decker was out today, but she said she does the scheduling anyway, so she helped us out by looking at his calendar. She said he is available either week, but that March 6,7,8 would be the better choice. She also said they would make sure Wally was available for either week.

On Fri, Jan 19, 2018 at 8:40 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Good morning,
>
> I spoke with Brian Upton a couple of minutes ago and he told me that both of the weeks we are proposing work for him, although he would prefer Will's preferred week (March 6 - 8).
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> Brian just wants to check one more thing to make sure there are no scheduling conflicts, but told me that if I don't hear back from him or Dale, that it is OK to reschedule the alternatives workshop to either of the weeks we are proposing.
>
> Any news from the NBRC staff ability to reschedule the workshop?
>
> How about Lake County and MTFWP?
>
> Thanks
>
> --
> **Bernardo Garza**
> **Planning Team Leader**
> **Branch of Planning and Policy**
> **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region**
> **Office (303) 236-4377**
> **Fax (303) 236-4792**

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
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406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Sundseth, Kent
To: Fields, Vanessa
Cc: Bernardo Garza
Subject: Re: Alternatives Workshop - Contacting the Coop Agencies - Update 2
Date: Friday, January 19, 2018 9:52:03 AM

Thanks for the update Vanessa.

The Lost Trail Staff have both indicated the Feb. 27 - March 2 works for them and that the March 6 - 8 is problematic. I will let you know what I hear from NBR staff ASAP.

On Fri, Jan 19, 2018 at 10:45 AM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> I just spoke to the administrative person at Lake County. Gale Decker was out today, but she said she does the scheduling anyway, so she helped us out by looking at his calendar. She said he is available either week, but that March 6,7,8 would be the better choice. She also said they would make sure Wally was available for either week.
>
> On Fri, Jan 19, 2018 at 8:40 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:
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> > **Bernardo Garza**
> > **Planning Team Leader**
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--
Kent Sundseth
Acting Project Leader
National Bison Range Complex
ph. 406 644-2211 ext. 204
Cell 701 680-7592

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Bernardo Garza
Subject: Re: Proposed dates for CCP Alternatives Workshop
Date: Friday, January 19, 2018 10:06:14 AM

I just talked to Beverly-

She is committed to presenting at a workshop that has 30 people coming and has been scheduled for 6 months on March 7th and she has a doctor's appointment that takes 6 months to schedule on Tuesday, March 6th. She could come the 8th. Or Feb 27-March 1 is completely fine for her.

On Fri, Jan 19, 2018 at 9:36 AM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> I can follow up and see if Beverly absolutely can't make it the week of March 5th?
>
> ---------- Forwarded message ----------
> From: **Shinn, Kevin** <kevin_shinn@fws.gov>
> Date: Fri, Jan 19, 2018 at 8:07 AM
> Subject: Re: Proposed dates for CCP Alternatives Workshop
> To: "Sundseth, Kent" <kent_sundseth@fws.gov>
> Cc: Amy Lisk <amy_lisk@fws.gov>, Beverly <beverly_skinner@fws.gov>, Brent <brent_woodger@fws.gov>, Dean Vaughan <dean_vaughan@fws.gov>, Karen Shoemaker <karen_shoemaker@fws.gov>, Marlin McDonald <marlin_mcdonald@fws.gov>, Mike Koole <mike_koole@fws.gov>, "Fields, Vanessa" <vanessa_fields@fws.gov>
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> Kent,
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> I am not sure why we are changing the dates again, it took some date switching to set up our current 13-15 dates. I hope we can still make the current dates work. It is important to have Beverly at our workshop, so I would suggest February 27-March 1 if we have to move it.
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> On Thu, Jan 18, 2018 at 2:55 PM, Sundseth, Kent <kent_sundseth@fws.gov> wrote:
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> > The planning team for the NBR/Lost Trail CCP process is working to determine final dates for the Alternatives Workshop in Polson, MT. Input from the staff is very valuable they would like as many of you to participate as possible. The dates being proposed are:
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> > February 27 - March 1
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> > This is a high priority, so even if your schedule doesn't allow you to attend all three days, you should consider attending when you can. Please let me know as soon as possible if you have a preference for either of these three day windows, and I will pass that on. Just let me know if we have any questions. Thanks!

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From: Sundseth, Kent
To: Fields, Vanessa
Subject: Alternatives Workshop dates
Date: Monday, January 22, 2018 9:49:56 AM

HI Vanessa,

Sorry for the slow response. Shutdown craziness!

I spoke with each staff member. They are largely flexible. However, the biologist says the second week (3/6 - 3/8) would be ideal. Just let me know if you need anything else. Thanks!

Kent

--
Kent Sundseth
Acting Project Leader
National Bison Range Complex
ph. 406 644-2211 ext. 204
Cell 701 680-7592

From:	Fields, Vanessa
To:	Bernardo Garza
Subject:	Fwd: Alternatives Workshop dates
Date:	Tuesday, January 23, 2018 7:23:55 AM
Attachments:	AltWorkshop_DecisionMatrix.xlsx

See Kent's response below-

I did a little matrix/spreadsheet of our options (see attached) to organize my thoughts. Is it accurate? Which day of the workshop would Brian Upton have to miss in the Feb 27th option?

I would propose we have a short (10-15min) call today with Kent and either Will or Mo' to finalize our decision (and sharing the matrix with them so they can see the trade-offs).

Could you give me a call on my cell when you get in?

Welcome back! ;)

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Sundseth, Kent** <kent_sundseth@fws.gov>
Date: Mon, Jan 22, 2018 at 9:49 AM
Subject: Alternatives Workshop dates
To: "Fields, Vanessa" <vanessa_fields@fws.gov>

HI Vanessa,

Sorry for the slow response. Shutdown craziness!

I spoke with each staff member. They are largely flexible. However, the biologist says the second week (3/6 - 3/8) would be ideal. Just let me know if you need anything else. Thanks!

Kent

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Kent Sundseth
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406-217-6473 (cell)

	13-Feb	27-Feb	6-Mar
NBRC Staff		3	2
Will Meeks			
Bernardo Garza			
Vanessa Fields		5	
CSKT		3	
Lake County			
Sanders County			
MT FWP		4	4
BIA			
Facilitator	1		

YES
Maybe/Not preferred week but could still r
No or Limited participation

1. Facilitator (Erika) is out of country for this week; contractor could provide a replacement (but Erika is cor
2. Beverly Skinner (Biologist/LTR) cannot make Tues (Dr appt) or Wed (previous commitment to be a prese
3. Brian Upton would have to miss one day of workshop; Dale Becker from CSKT all 3 days
4. MTFWP is open these dates, but did not commit if something else comes up
5. DSR 5-year plan strategic meeting is this week

nake it

nsidered their best facilitator)
nter at a large workshop) - she could make Thursday

From:	Fields, Vanessa
To:	Bernardo Garza; Kent Sundseth; Kevin Shinn; Will Meeks; Maureen Gallagher
Subject:	Bison Range Meeting: Response requested
Date:	Tuesday, January 23, 2018 11:46:25 AM
Attachments:	AltWorkshop_DecisionMatrix.xlsx

Good morning-

Bernardo and I have been working to reschedule the Alternatives Workshop so that we can get maximum participation. Unfortunately (but not surprisingly) we cannot find a week where everyone on the NBRC staff and the planning team can make all three days.

Attached is a matrix of availability to give you a quick snapshot of what our choices are.

Because there is not a clear "best" choice, Bernardo and I need your input. Based on Will and Maureen's calendars, it looks like a quick call would have to be pretty early or late in the day - or at lunch. Or we could finalize this by email, please let us know how you would like to proceed and/or if you have questions.

Thank you

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

	2/13/2018-2/15/2018	2/27/2018 - 3/1/2018	3/6/2018 - 3/8/2018
NBRC Staff			2
Will Meeks			
Bernardo Garza			
Vanessa Fields		5	
CSKT		3	
Lake County			
Sanders County			
MT FWP		4	4
BIA			
Facilitator	1		

YES
Maybe/Not preferred week but
No or Limited participation

1. Facilitator (Erika) is out of country for this week; contractor could provide a replacement (but Erika is cons
2. Beverly Skinner (Biologist/LTR) cannot Tues or Wed - we could possibly move workshop to Wed-Fri so tha
3. Brian Upton would have to miss last day of workshop - we could possibly move workshop to Mon-Wed; D
4. MTFWP is open these dates, but did not commit if something else comes up
5. DSR 5-year plan strategic meeting is this week

: could still make it

sidered their best facilitator)
t she only misses one day
)ale Becker from CSKT all 3 days

From:	Fields, Vanessa
To:	Amy Lisk; Bernardo Garza; Beverly Skinner; Brent Woodger; Dean Vaughan; Karen Shoemaker; Kelly Hogan; Kevin Shinn; Marlin McDonald; Matthew McCollister; Mike Koole; Kent Sundseth
Subject:	Draft agenda - google drive
Date:	Tuesday, January 23, 2018 11:50:00 AM

I have placed a copy of the draft agenda in the folder we created on the google drive. You can get to it by clicking here. Bernardo and I will be taking notes from today's call on this version, so you will have it as a handy reference as we prepare for the workshop.

Thanks!

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From: Kevin Shinn
To: Fields, Vanessa
Cc: Bernardo Garza; Kent Sundseth; Will Meeks; Maureen Gallagher
Subject: Re: Bison Range Meeting: Response requested
Date: Tuesday, January 23, 2018 12:01:12 PM

I am on travel teaching this week. I could do a call in the morning
before classes start, but unable later in day.

Sent from my iPhone

> On Jan 23, 2018, at 11:46 AM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:
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>
> <AltWorkshop_DecisionMatrix.xlsx>

From:	Fields, Vanessa
To:	Kent Sundseth; Amy Lisk; Beverly Skinner
Cc:	Bernardo Garza
Subject:	CCP Goals for today"s call
Date:	Tuesday, January 23, 2018 12:38:22 PM

Kent/Amy/Bev-

We are going to be discussing the goals on today's call - it might be nice to have a handout/refresher. I uploaded a copy of the purpose, vision, goals workshop report on the google drive (here) - the last two pages have the current draft goals - if you could print copies for those that will be on the call, that would be great!

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
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Great Falls, MT 59404
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406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Lisk, Amy
To: Fields, Vanessa
Subject: Re: Draft agenda - google drive
Date: Tuesday, January 23, 2018 12:40:51 PM

Thanks Vanessa!

On Tue, Jan 23, 2018 at 11:50 AM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> I have placed a copy of the draft agenda in the folder we created on the google drive. You can get to it by clicking here. Bernardo and I will be taking notes from today's call on this version, so you will have it as a handy reference as we prepare for the workshop.
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--
Amy Lisk

Wildlife Biologist
National Bison Range Complex
US Fish and Wildlife Service

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406-644-2211 x 217
Fax: 406-644-2661
amy_lisk@fws.gov

Visit our new website at http://www.fws.gov/refuge/national_bison_range/
AND check out the National Bison Range on Facebook!!

Comprehensive Conservation Plan
Alternatives Workshop Agenda

Purpose: To bring the NBRC CCP Planning Team together to collaboratively develop a viable set of alternative plans for the NBRC CCPs.

Intended Outcome: Range of Management Alternatives with written descriptions and a completed Alternatives Matrix.

Location: Red Lion Inn, 209 Ridgewater Drive, Polson, MT 59860

Dates: March 7-9, 2018

DAY 1

8:30 Welcome and Workshop Introduction

- Welcome the planning team.
- Give overview of the workshop (intent and outcome).
- Describe roles and responsibilities of workshop leaders, facilitation team, planning team.
- Introduce facilitation team, who will go over workshop logistics.

8:45 Team Connection

- Exercise designed to invigorate the attendees and prepare them for an interactive workshop.

9:00 Planning Process Reflection (Broader overview)

- Recap of CCP planning process, including review of alternative development steps.
- Provide synopsis of the previous CCP attempt, including what was discovered last time and which ideas seemed to still have traction.
- Present the outcomes of the CCP planning steps completed to date and describe what happens next.
- Re-introduce CCP Vision and Goals agreed upon at last workshop, recognizing that they will be the foundation for developing the alternatives.

9:30 Birds Eye View of NBR Complex - Final version on google drive by Feb 28th

- Projected USFWS approach to managing NBRC within a more comprehensive Refuge context
  - (Will Meeks will contribute here too)
- Describe the importance of managing the NBRC units as one single complex, highlighting the major issues/ areas of focus for each unit (powerpoint). [The purpose of this section is not to repeat what has already been presented in previous meetings. This is for highlighting what are the most important issues that the CCP needs to address for each of these units [maybe have a slide of issues common to all units?]. It would be fine to combine units that share similar issues. ALSO REFER TO PUBLIC SCOPING REPORT/COMMENTS.]
  - LTR: Kevin Shinn
  - Flathead WMD: Kevin Shinn
  - Lake Co WMD: Amy Lisk
  - Ninepipe/Pablo: Amy Lisk
  - Bison Range: Amy Lisk
- Discuss any relevant/ pertinent models/ studies: is there something here?
  - HGM; Lost Trail CCP; Cecil Frost Fire study; follow up with Bev/Amy

10:30 BREAK

11:00 CCP Goal Topic Area Generation

- Discuss list of suggested goal topic areas provided as read-ahead
- Determine if there are other topic areas that should be incorporated to achieve each CCP goal.
- Team consensus on final set of topic areas to include in the alternatives development process.

Draft Goals for the NBR Complex CCPs - we will generate an initial brainstorm list today, and then have a review period (~1 week) and this will still be just a beginning point for going into the workshop with and to generate a final lists with whole team.

Wildlife Management Goal

Protect, maintain, and restore healthy and diverse wildlife populations with respect to species that are endemic, migratory, and mandated species of concern.

Sub-topics: Bison (metapopulation goals?), migratory birds and other native birds, wildlife health, Other ungulate populations, T&E species (lynx, wolverine, grizzly bear), Species of Concern (boreal toad, curlew), Fishery (restoration), Beaver (restoration),

**note for alternatives: bison population mgmt vs. habitat mgmt

Habitat Management Goal

Conserve, restore, and promote biological integrity in functional and sustainable ecologically diverse habitats of the inter-montane ecosystem of western Montana

Sub-topics: corridors/wildlife movement (restoration activities), land protection (fee/easement)[is this a sensitive topic? can it be considered?], Spaulding's catchfly recovery (T&E plants), prescribed fire (patch burning), forest management, prairie/grassland range management, wetland management, riparian management,

Invasive Species Goal

Prevent, reduce, and contain the invasion and spread of noxious, invasive, and harmful non-native species within the Complex while working with partners to address off-Complex infestations within the surrounding landscape.

Sub-topics: partnerships (cross-walk with partnership goal), priorities for invasives management,

Research and Science Goal

Encourage high quality research and promote the use of scientifically sound management decisions.

Sub-topics: partnership (cross-walk with partnership goal), populations, habitats, wildlife health, T&E/Species of Concern, restoration (for example: Spaulding's recovery, fire research, long-term research, grassland birds, bison distribution, soil crust, forest structure/restoration, big horn sheep)

Monitoring and Adaptive Management Goal

Through the life of this plan, we will monitor and evaluate the consequences of our actions and use adaptive management to reach desired outcomes.

Sub-topics: none at this time

Public Use Goal

Provide compatible, wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities, for persons of all abilities, to learn, enjoy, and appreciate the inter-montane landscape of western Montana, the fish and wildlife and plants.

Sub-topics: Hunting, Fishing, Wildlife Observation, Photography, Education and Interpretation (keep in mind impacts/monitoring effects of these); Access/Facilities (e.g. new parking lots, trails, visitor center);

Cultural Resources Goal

Preserve and value (interpret?) the cultural resources and history of the National Bison Range Complex to connect staff, visitors, and community to the area's past and continuing traditions.

Sub-topics: accessibility, protection, historical structures (Blasdel barn), early people's use, railroad,

Partnerships and Collaboration Goal

Maintain and cultivate partnerships that help achieve the vision and supporting goals and objectives of the National Bison Range Complex to support wildlife and habitat conservation, research, foster awareness and appreciation of natural and cultural resources and provide education along with all necessary infrastructure of the inter-montane ecosystem of western Montana.

Recognizing its importance, we will collaborate with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and other Tribal governments in a manner consistent with the Service's Native American policy and with other Federal, State, and local government entities in a manner consistent with applicable Service policies.

Sub-topics: from above (Invasives, Research, Habitat/Land acquisition), Big game management (LTR, WPAs), Restoration, Prescribed Fire,

Administration and Operations Goal

Effectively use funding, staff, partnerships, volunteers, and equipment to restore and manage Complex habitats, conduct programs, and improve and maintain all necessary infrastructure to the benefit of the Complex and the Refuge System.

Sub-topics: staffing, realignment, volunteers, equipment, infrastructure needs (dispose, replace, new)

We will use these as a starting point in the workshop, all planning team will contribute, edit, refine.

12:00 LUNCH

1:30 Visitor Services review (VS staff)

Current Complex Management Approach -Final version on google drive by Feb 28th

- Assess current management approach as it relates to the CCP goals and specific topic areas (already done this before? scoping meeting version is probably a bit too general, need to go into more detail) - Kevin/Amy [Bernardo and Vanessa will follow up to help with content]
- Populate the No Action portion of the Alternatives Matrix with participant input
- Determine where there may be need for adjustment to the topic areas based on team discussion

3:00 BREAK

3:30 Management Alternative Concepts - Idea-sharing

- Provide a platform for participants to introduce alternative concepts. (This request will be made PRIOR to the workshop so participants have the option to prepare a brief alternative concept description.)
- This information will work toward getting the team to think about different concepts/ themes for alternatives.

NBRC **DRAFT** Alternatives Concepts:

1. High visitation/public use: not to all units, but NBR would get more resources to provide services (Flathead and Blasdel WPAs, Smith Lake); "Protecting the landscape while providing services to the public" - create trails, new visitor center, better signage, VS staff, restore Blasdel barn, LTR pictographs accessible, but protected
2. Ecological sustainability/processes: focus on habitat (specifically for wildlife)
3. Wildlife population emphasis: ungulates, T&E species, counting things, focused on wildlife goals (population etc.)
4. Landscape/Partner collaboration focus?
5. Maybe a combo theme? recognition of a variety of priorities or diversity of priorities - especially because there is so much diversity in complex. e.g. bison in establishing legislation at NBR; prioritizing visitor services in some places; migratory birds in other places (see NER example).

4:30 Day 1 Review

- Highlight items covered and outcomes
- Team observations
- Look ahead to Day 2 activities

5:00 End of Day 1

Team Dinner (optional)

DAY 2

8:00 Morning Check in

- Exercise designed to energize the team and prepare them for a day of interaction

8:15 Day 2 Alignment

- Brief recap of Day 1 accomplishments
- Introduction of Day 2 focus

8:30 Management Alternatives Concept Development

- Small group discussion of possible concepts (refer to examples and presentations from Day 1)
- Small group introduction of strongest concepts with brief descriptions

9:30 Morning Stretch

- Wall Walk – Participant select the alternative concepts that they would like to see move forward.
- This activity is part of the **Morning Break**.

10:00 Management Alternatives Concept Review

- Team discusses the top tier of management alternatives concepts
- Fine-tune the descriptions of top tier management alternative concepts
- Obtain team consensus on management alternative concepts moving forward

11:00 Overview of Alternatives Development

- Re-introduce Alternatives Matrix, CCP goals, and specific topic areas
- Review the No Action Plan portion of the Alternatives Matrix (from Day 1 activity)
- Develop key components of CCP goal topic areas for inclusion into alternative concepts

12:00 LUNCH

1:30 Alternatives Development

- Small group activity to fill in the Alternatives Matrix for the alternatives
- Key components of CCP goal topic areas worksheets will be incorporated into the matrix input
- A checklist of items to consider when populating the matrix will be provided to encourage the development of well-rounded, distinguishable, goal-oriented alternatives.
- An **Afternoon Break** will be integrated into this activity

4:30 Day 2 Review

- Highlight workshop items covered and outcomes
- Team observations
- Look ahead to Day 3 activities

5:00 End of Day 2

Team Dinner (optional)

DAY 3

8:00 Morning Check in

- Exercise designed to energize the team and prepare them for a day of interaction

8:15 Day 3 Alignment

- Brief recap of Day 2 accomplishments
- Introduction of Day 3 focus

8:30 Alternatives Presentations

- Each Alternative will be introduced by a participant identified as the advocate for that alternative. They will walk the planning team through the Alternatives Matrix information.
- Planning Team will provide additional comments and suggestions for updating the matrix information.
- A checklist will be provided to encourage the development of well-rounded, distinguishable, goal-oriented alternatives.
- A **Morning Break** will be integrated into this exercise.

11:00 Alternatives Refinement

- Provide additional input to the alternatives presented for team consideration.

11:30 Team Lunch (optional)

1:00 Team Review of Alternatives Refinement

- Planning team will review and consider additional input and update the alternatives accordingly.

2:30 Workshop Reflection

- Review of items covered during the workshop
- Shared observations team activity
- Individual feedback on the workshop process, logistics, and outcome (short questionnaire)

3:30 Next Steps, Team Recognition, and Workshop Closing

4:00 Conclusion of Alternatives Workshop

Follow up steps:

DONE: ~~Tuesday, February 6th, combined staff meetings (will send calendar invite) at 9am (conf call #)~~
EMAIL INQUIRY SENT: Vanessa and Bernardo will work with Amy and Kevin to develop their presentations
ON-GOING: comment/ideas on this agenda (google document) (re-visit on Feb 6th call)
DONE: ~~Vanessa will make sure that Scoping Summary Report is on the google drive~~
We will send out pre-meeting materials ahead of workshop (all planning team members)

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Kevin Shinn
Subject: Re: Bison Range Meeting: Response requested
Date: Tuesday, January 23, 2018 12:50:27 PM

Where are you/what time zone? Or what hours would you be available in MST?

On Tue, Jan 23, 2018 at 12:01 PM, Kevin Shinn <kevin_shinn@fws.gov> wrote:

> I am on travel teaching this week. I could do a call in the morning
> before classes start, but unable later in day.
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From: Shinn, Kevin
To: Fields, Vanessa
Subject: Re: Bison Range Meeting: Response requested
Date: Tuesday, January 23, 2018 12:53:45 PM

I may even see you. I am teaching with Clay at Fort Benton for the PD and Sheriffs Office. 8 or 9 would be best.

On Tue, Jan 23, 2018 at 12:50 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> Where are you/what time zone? Or what hours would you be available in MST?
>
> On Tue, Jan 23, 2018 at 12:01 PM, Kevin Shinn <kevin_shinn@fws.gov> wrote:
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--
Kevin J. Shinn
Manager/Federal Wildlife Officer
Lost Trail NWR/NW Montana WMD
406-858-2216 Office
406-260-5192 cell

From: Shinn, Kevin
To: Fields, Vanessa; Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: Draft agenda - google drive
Date: Tuesday, January 23, 2018 3:32:39 PM

Thanks guys for all the help. I will be back Friday afternoon, so would have to wait until next week to start planning. I will look for your dates.

On Tue, Jan 23, 2018 at 11:50 AM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

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From:	Fields, Vanessa
To:	Bernardo Garza; Kevin Shinn; Amy Lisk
Cc:	Kent Sundseth
Subject:	Alt Workshop prep
Date:	Tuesday, January 23, 2018 3:39:54 PM

Hi there-

I think I will try to do my own homemade doodle poll here in an email - how about the following days/times next week for getting together to talk about the Alternatives Workshop presentations:

Tuesday (30th): at 1pm
Wednesday (1st) at 10am or 1pm
Thursday (2nd) at 1pm

Call will probably last an hour. Please let me know what works for you.

Thanks!

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
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From:	Lisk, Amy
To:	Fields, Vanessa
Cc:	Bernardo Garza; Kevin Shinn; Kent Sundseth
Subject:	Re: Alt Workshop prep
Date:	Tuesday, January 23, 2018 5:15:30 PM

Wednesday or either time works for me best but I can make Thursday work too.
Thanks

On Tue, Jan 23, 2018 at 3:39 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

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Amy Lisk

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amy_lisk@fws.gov

Visit our new website at http://www.fws.gov/refuge/national_bison_range/

AND check out the National Bison Range on Facebook!!

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: nanderson@mt.gov
Subject: Bison Range Workshop Dates - response requested
Date: Wednesday, January 24, 2018 7:58:30 AM

Good morning Neil-

We are still trying to nail down the dates for the Alternatives Development workshop for the National Bison Range Complex CCP. Could you let me know if the following dates still or would work for you?

February 26-28th (Mon-Wed)?
February 27-March 1 (Tues-Thur)?
March 6-8th (Tues-Thur)? I know you previously said you could not make the 8th.
March 7th-9th (Wed-Fri)?

The meeting will be at the Red Lion Inn in Polson. We are hoping if we do a small shift in the dates we can get almost everyone there.

Thanks!

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
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From: Skinner, Beverly
To: Fields, Vanessa
Subject: pertinent studies
Date: Wednesday, January 24, 2018 9:12:33 AM

Very helpful call yesterday. Sorry I can't be more flexible on the new proposed dates but I think it will work. I will need to leave Polson around 3:30 in order to arrive in Kalispell by 5 pm on the 7th. I may just spend the night in a hotel in Kalispell instead of driving back down to Polson after my program (ends around 8:30 or 9:00).

I did not make it through all the files as of yet but this is what I have so far. Maybe this week I can finish out the file search.

Can you maybe give me an idea of what I should pull and/or make copies of? Right now I am just documenting where these are located.

Public Tear Sheets: LTNWR and NWMTWMD
Where the Green Grass Grows - Pleasant Valley 1880 - 1946
Cecil Frost: Silene Soil and Fire Notes
Lost Trail NWR Pre-European Fire Regimes Map
Lost Trail NWR Pre-European Vegetation Map
Lost Trail NWR Fire History
River Design Group: LTNWR Wetland Delineation Report 2014
USGS Boreal Toad research/data
Some common garter snake data
Bald Eagle nesting data
Peter Lesica: A Vascular Plant Checklist for LTNWR
Historical reports - Pictographs, historic buildings, Blasdel Barn and RO report
Richard Keigley - 2009 Report: A Multi-Refuge Program to Evaluate the Effect of Ungulate Browsing on Habitat on LTNWR
Ultrasonic call inventory of LTNWR bat species
PhD study on LTNWR range grasses
Acoustic call inventory of LTNWR bird/mammal species within wetland restoration/road movement areas of LTNWR
Lynn Verlanic: elk use/numbers in select areas of the refuge
CCP Lost Trail NWR - 2005
Important Plant Area (Montana) Nomination Report for LTNWR
Dahl Lake Depth Map
Water Flow Monitoring Data Report
LTNWR Fisheries Report
McGregor Meadows WPA Fisheries Report
HMP Draft - Flathead WPA
HDP Draft - Flathead WPA, McGregor Meadows WPA and LTNWR - 1999
HDP LTNWR - 2008
LTNWR - Notes from previous private land owner
DU Project on Batavia WPA
Flathead WPA: Willow project, flowering rush issues, shoreline work project, 1981 HMP, erosion control issues
LTNWR - Dahl Lake Veg study
McGregor Meadows Restoration

EA draft - purchases of land LTNWR
LTNWR water rights reports
Water rights reports - Batavia WPA, Smith Lake WPA, McGregor Meadows WPA
Kerr Dam Remediation documents
NEPA - hunting on LTNWR
EA Upland Habitats Ninepipe, Pablo and NWMWD 1995
Ducks Unlimited and Batavia WPA
FmHA easements
Batavia WPA dike info and fence plans
Flathead WPA - access issues
Smith Lake WPA - maps and adjacent buildings
Flathead WPA - fences and nesting structures
LTNWR - boundary fences
Annual Narratives: NWMWMD scattered years from 1936 to 2004
Compatibility determination LTNWR
NWMRWMD Compatability determination
Handicapped Hunt LTNWR records 2013 - 2017

--
Beverly Roedner Skinner
beverly_skinner@fws.gov
Wildlife Biologist
Lost Trail National Wildlife Refuge
6295 Pleasant Valley Road
Marion, Montana 59925
406-858- 2286
406-858-2218 (fax)

Visit our new websites at http://www.fws.gov/refuge/lost_trail/
<http://www.fws.gov/refuge/national_bison_range/>
http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Northwest_Montana_Flathead_County_WMD/

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Brian Upton; Dale Becker
Subject: Re: alternatives workshop
Date: Wednesday, January 24, 2018 10:20:47 AM

Good morning Brian,

Thank you for letting me know about Dale Becker's scheduling conflict during the week of March 5.

We are also having issues with the schedule for some of the members of the National Bison Range Complex. So I would like to ask you and Dale if the following might work for both of you.

The most recent days that we proposed to do the workshop are February 27 through March 1, or March 6 – 8. If we were to move those dates slightly, to either February 26 - 28 (Monday through Wednesday), or March 7 – 9 (Wednesday through Friday), would either one of those set of dates work for you and Dale?

Please let me know and thank you for your patience with the scheduling difficulties.

Bernardo

On Tue, Jan 23, 2018 at 5:15 PM, Brian Upton <Brian.Upton@cskt.org> wrote:

> Hi Bernardo,
>
> I just wanted to let you know that Dale Becker has a conflict on the morning of Wednesday, March 7th so, if that were to be the week the alternatives workshop ends up being scheduled, he would miss the morning portion of the workshop but would otherwise be able to make the rest of the meetings including that afternoon. If that week is the best for everyone, we're still fine with the workshop being scheduled the week of March 5th but I just wanted you to be aware of Dale's situation. Thanks again for all of your time and effort in scheduling. Let me know if any questions.
>
> BU

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From:	Brian Upton
To:	Garza, Bernardo; Dale Becker
Subject:	RE: alternatives workshop
Date:	Wednesday, January 24, 2018 10:54:45 AM

Thank you Bernardo. Dale is on leave right now, but I will try to reach him and get you some feedback as soon as possible.

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2018 10:21 AM
To: Brian Upton; Dale Becker
Subject: Re: alternatives workshop

Good morning Brian,

Thank you for letting me know about Dale Becker's scheduling conflict during the week of March 5.

We are also having issues with the schedule for some of the members of the National Bison Range Complex. So I would like to ask you and Dale if the following might work for both of you.

The most recent days that we proposed to do the workshop are February 27 through March 1, or March 6 – 8. If we were to move those dates slightly, to either February 26 - 28 (Monday through Wednesday), or March 7 – 9 (Wednesday through Friday), would either one of those set of dates work for you and Dale?

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BU

--
Bernardo Garza

Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Brian Upton
Subject: Re: alternatives workshop
Date: Wednesday, January 24, 2018 11:06:01 AM

Thank you very much Brian

On Wed, Jan 24, 2018 at 10:54 AM, Brian Upton <Brian.Upton@cskt.org> wrote:

> Thank you Bernardo. Dale is on leave right now, but I will try to reach him and get you some feedback as soon as possible.
>
> **From:** Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
> **Sent:** Wednesday, January 24, 2018 10:21 AM
> **To:** Brian Upton; Dale Becker
> **Subject:** Re: alternatives workshop
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Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
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From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Bernardo Garza
Subject: Fwd: NBRC CCP: Scoping Report
Date: Wednesday, January 24, 2018 11:26:30 AM

Amy's email
---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Fields, Vanessa** <vanessa_fields@fws.gov>
Date: Tue, Jan 23, 2018 at 4:22 PM
Subject: Re: NBRC CCP: Scoping Report
To: "Lisk, Amy" <amy_lisk@fws.gov>

No worries! We really want to take the time we need to answer questions and make sure you all are comfortable with what we are doing. I think Bernardo and I were the confused ones because we weren't understanding your question properly. Keep asking questions and don't let us off the hook until we give you a good answer!

On Tue, Jan 23, 2018 at 4:10 PM, Lisk, Amy <amy_lisk@fws.gov> wrote:

> Sorry I'm so easily confused, I clearly can't seem to spit out my questions properly
>
> On Tue, Jan 23, 2018 at 3:46 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> > The summary of public comments received during scoping is on the google drive here.
> >
> > --
> > Vanessa Fields
> > Invasive Species Ecologist
> > Division of Science Resources
> > 922 Bootlegger Trail
> > Great Falls, MT 59404
> > 406-727-7400 x219
> > 406-217-6473 (cell)

--
Amy Lisk

Wildlife Biologist
National Bison Range Complex
US Fish and Wildlife Service

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Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
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406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Lisk, Amy
To: Fields, Vanessa
Subject: Re: NBRC CCP: Scoping Report
Date: Wednesday, January 24, 2018 11:59:00 AM

Well since you encourage clarity...

The interchanging use of the terms "comments" and "issues" during the call confused me a bit since they are separated in the scoping report, whereas comments came from the public and issues came from the agencies. My understanding was that the key comments sections under each topic in the beginning of the scoping report is a summary of the public comments from the NOI's and the scoping meetings.

We felt that it was a good idea to revisit some of these things prior to drafting alternatives, but then as we discussed this further Bernardo said he weighs all of the issues and comments equally (whether public or from cooperators). We understand that the amount of substantive comments from the public is far less than the total, which the scoping report has already addressed, yet it is still quite long.

I was looking for guidance on how to sum it up further or prioritize for the purpose of a brief group review during the birds eye view of the complex session.
Seems to me that time is of the essence but again the staff felt it was important to review these things with the larger group for consideration prior to drafting alternatives.
Maybe it isn't important?

I assume this is something Kevin and I will work with you and Bernardo on this in the coming weeks.
Just an FYI, we had a hard time hearing Matt on the call and even though we mentioned a couple times, it didn't get much better. Conference lines can be a pain but I don't want that to stop us from hearing everyone's input!

Thanks for all your hard work,
A

On Tue, Jan 23, 2018 at 4:22 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> No worries! We really want to take the time we need to answer questions and make sure you all are comfortable with what we are doing. I think Bernardo and I were the confused ones because we weren't understanding your question properly. Keep asking questions and don't let us off the hook until we give you a good answer!
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> --
> Amy Lisk
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> Wildlife Biologist
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From:	Anderson, Neil
To:	Fields, Vanessa
Subject:	RE: Bison Range Workshop Dates - response requested
Date:	Wednesday, January 24, 2018 12:55:39 PM

Vanessa,

Feb 26-28 works the best for me right now. March 6-8 would work, but as you mentioned I would miss the 8th due to other commitments.

Thanks,

Neil

Neil Anderson
R1 Wildlife Manager
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
490 North Meridian Rd
Kalispell, MT 59901
(406) 751-4585
NAnderson@mt.gov

From: Fields, Vanessa [mailto:vanessa_fields@fws.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2018 7:59 AM
To: Anderson, Neil <NAnderson@mt.gov>
Subject: Bison Range Workshop Dates - response requested

Good morning Neil-

We are still trying to nail down the dates for the Alternatives Development workshop for the National Bison Range Complex CCP. Could you let me know if the following dates still or would work for you?

February 26-28th (Mon-Wed)?
February 27-March 1 (Tues-Thur)?
March 6-8th (Tues-Thur)? I know you previously said you could not make the 8th.
March 7th-9th (Wed-Fri)?

The meeting will be at the Red Lion Inn in Polson. We are hoping if we do a small shift in the dates we can get almost everyone there.

Thanks!

--
Vanessa Fields

Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Lisk, Amy
Subject: Re: NBRC CCP: Scoping Report
Date: Wednesday, January 24, 2018 1:14:25 PM

Thank you for providing additional clarification - I think I understand better now, and definitely Bernardo and I need to be aware of using words like "issues" and "comments" interchangeably or not in a consistent manner and how that can cause confusion. We certainly don't want to continue to do that or magnify that in the workshop too. We will definitely take whatever time we need to discuss this further when you, Kevin, Bernardo and I talk - it IS important and if through our discussions we need to adjust the agenda to provide more time or develop some additional handouts, we are absolutely open to considering that.

Am I also hearing a concern that as a group (just staff or whole planning team) that there hasn't been adequate discussion of the comments we got through scoping and/or identification of key issues so that folks feel ready to jump into alternatives? Or is the concern more about how to distill all of this into a presentation? Or both?

On Wed, Jan 24, 2018 at 11:58 AM, Lisk, Amy <amy_lisk@fws.gov> wrote:

> Well since you encourage clarity...
>
> The interchanging use of the terms "comments" and "issues" during the call confused me a bit since they are separated in the scoping report, whereas comments came from the public and issues came from the agencies. My understanding was that the key comments sections under each topic in the beginning of the scoping report is a summary of the public comments from the NOI's and the scoping meetings.
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> We felt that it was a good idea to revisit some of these things prior to drafting alternatives, but then as we discussed this further Bernardo said he weighs all of the issues and comments equally (whether public or from cooperators). We understand that the amount of substantive comments from the public is far less than the total, which the scoping report has already addressed, yet it is still quite long.
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> I was looking for guidance on how to sum it up further or prioritize for the purpose of a brief group review during the birds eye view of the complex session.
> Seems to me that time is of the essence but again the staff felt it was important to review these things with the larger group for consideration prior to drafting alternatives.
> Maybe it isn't important?
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> I assume this is something Kevin and I will work with you and Bernardo on this in the coming weeks.
> Just an FYI, we had a hard time hearing Matt on the call and even though we mentioned a couple times, it didn't get much better. Conference lines can be a pain but I don't want that to stop us from hearing everyone's input!
>
> Thanks for all your hard work,
> A
>
> On Tue, Jan 23, 2018 at 4:22 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> >

No worries! We really want to take the time we need to answer questions and make sure you all are comfortable with what we are doing. I think Bernardo and I were the confused ones because we weren't understanding your question properly. Keep asking questions and don't let us off the hook until we give you a good answer!

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Great Falls, MT 59404
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406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Anderson, Neil
Cc: Bernardo Garza
Subject: Re: Bison Range Workshop Dates - response requested
Date: Wednesday, January 24, 2018 1:15:55 PM

Neil-

Thanks so much for getting back to us so quickly, we will get back to you with solid dates as soon as we possibly can!

On Wed, Jan 24, 2018 at 12:55 PM, Anderson, Neil <NAnderson@mt.gov> wrote:

> Vanessa,
>
> Feb 26-28 works the best for me right now. March 6-8 would work, but as you mentioned I would miss the 8th due to other commitments.
>
> Thanks,
>
> Neil
>
> Neil Anderson
>
> R1 Wildlife Manager
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> 490 North Meridian Rd
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> Kalispell, MT 59901
>
> (406) 751-4585
>
> NAnderson@mt.gov
>
> **From:** Fields, Vanessa [mailto:vanessa_fields@fws.gov]
> **Sent:** Wednesday, January 24, 2018 7:59 AM
> **To:** Anderson, Neil <NAnderson@mt.gov>
> **Subject:** Bison Range Workshop Dates - response requested

Good morning Neil-

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March 7th-9th (Wed-Fri)?

The meeting will be at the Red Lion Inn in Polson. We are hoping if we do a small shift in the dates we can get almost everyone there.

Thanks!

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--

Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
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From:	Will Meeks
To:	Fields, Vanessa
Cc:	Bernardo Garza; Kent Sundseth; Kevin Shinn; Maureen Gallagher
Subject:	Re: Bison Range Meeting: Response requested
Date:	Thursday, January 25, 2018 7:23:36 AM

Make it work first for the cooperating agencies, I'm secondary.

It's never perfect. We can try to straighten this out via email.

Will Meeks
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mountain-Prairie Region
Assistant Regional Director
National Wildlife Refuge System
303-236-4303(w)
720-541-0310 (c)

> On Jan 23, 2018, at 11:46 AM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> Good morning-
>
> Bernardo and I have been working to reschedule the Alternatives Workshop so that we can get maximum participation. Unfortunately (but not surprisingly) we cannot find a week where everyone on the NBRC staff and the planning team can make all three days.
>
> Attached is a matrix of availability to give you a quick snapshot of what our choices are.
>
> Because there is not a clear "best" choice, Bernardo and I need your input. Based on Will and Maureen's calendars, it looks like a quick call would have to be pretty early or late in the day - or at lunch. Or we could finalize this by email, please let us know how you would like to proceed and/or if you have questions.
>
> Thank you
>
> --
> Vanessa Fields
> Invasive Species Ecologist
> Division of Science Resources
> 922 Bootlegger Trail
> Great Falls, MT 59404
> 406-727-7400 x219
> 406-217-6473 (cell)
>
> <AltWorkshop_DecisionMatrix.xlsx>

From: Kevin Shinn
To: Lisk, Amy
Cc: Fields, Vanessa; Bernardo Garza; Kent Sundseth
Subject: Re: Alt Workshop prep
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2018 8:22:24 AM

I could do the 1:00 time either day.

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 23, 2018, at 5:15 PM, Lisk, Amy <amy_lisk@fws.gov> wrote:

> Wednesday or either time works for me best but I can make Thursday work too. Thanks
>
> On Tue, Jan 23, 2018 at 3:39 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> > Hi there-
> >
> > I think I will try to do my own homemade doodle poll here in an email - how about the following days/times next week for getting together to talk about the Alternatives Workshop presentations:
> >
> > Tuesday (30th): at 1pm
> > Wednesday (1st) at 10am or 1pm
> > Thursday (2nd) at 1pm
> >
> > Call will probably last an hour. Please let me know what works for you.
> >
> > Thanks!
> >
> > --
> > Vanessa Fields
> > Invasive Species Ecologist
> > Division of Science Resources
> > 922 Bootlegger Trail
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> --
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AND check out the National Bison Range on Facebook!!

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Brian Upton
Subject: Re: alternatives workshop
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2018 10:08:32 AM

Good morning Brian,

Have you had any news from Dale?

On Wed, Jan 24, 2018 at 10:54 AM, Brian Upton <Brian.Upton@cskt.org> wrote:

> Thank you Bernardo. Dale is on leave right now, but I will try to reach him and get you some feedback as soon as possible.
>
> **From:** Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
> **Sent:** Wednesday, January 24, 2018 10:21 AM
> **To:** Brian Upton; Dale Becker
> **Subject:** Re: alternatives workshop
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> Good morning Brian,
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> Thank you for letting me know about Dale Becker's scheduling conflict during the week of March 5.
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> Bernardo

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Bernardo Garza

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Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
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Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Brian Upton
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: RE: alternatives workshop
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2018 10:15:20 AM

Not yet, but I just tried contacting him again and asked him to get back with me as soon as he can. I'll try again if I don't hear from him by this afternoon.

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2018 10:09 AM
To: Brian Upton
Subject: Re: alternatives workshop

Good morning Brian,

Have you had any news from Dale?

On Wed, Jan 24, 2018 at 10:54 AM, Brian Upton <Brian.Upton@cskt.org> wrote:
Thank you Bernardo. Dale is on leave right now, but I will try to reach him and get you some feedback as soon as possible.

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2018 10:21 AM
To: Brian Upton; Dale Becker
Subject: Re: alternatives workshop

Good morning Brian,

Thank you for letting me know about Dale Becker's scheduling conflict during the week of March 5.

We are also having issues with the schedule for some of the members of the National Bison Range Complex. So I would like to ask you and Dale if the following might work for both of you.

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--
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Planning Team Leader
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Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Brian Upton
Subject: Re: alternatives workshop
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2018 10:18:22 AM

Thank you very much Brian and I'm sorry to be insistent. I don't mean to but I'm trying to schedule the workshop so that all participants can make travel and work plans.

On Thu, Jan 25, 2018 at 10:15 AM, Brian Upton <Brian.Upton@cskt.org> wrote:

> Not yet, but I just tried contacting him again and asked him to get back with me as soon as he can. I'll try again if I don't hear from him by this afternoon.
>
> **From:** Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
> **Sent:** Thursday, January 25, 2018 10:09 AM
> **To:** Brian Upton
> **Subject:** Re: alternatives workshop
>
> Good morning Brian,
>
> Have you had any news from Dale?
>
> On Wed, Jan 24, 2018 at 10:54 AM, Brian Upton <Brian.Upton@cskt.org> wrote:
>
> > Thank you Bernardo. Dale is on leave right now, but I will try to reach him and get you some feedback as soon as possible.
> >
> > **From:** Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
> > **Sent:** Wednesday, January 24, 2018 10:21 AM
> > **To:** Brian Upton; Dale Becker
> > **Subject:** Re: alternatives workshop
> >
> > Good morning Brian,
> >
> > Thank you for letting me know about Dale Becker's scheduling conflict during the week of

March 5.

We are also having issues with the schedule for some of the members of the National Bison Range Complex. So I would like to ask you and Dale if the following might work for both of you.

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Please let me know and thank you for your patience with the scheduling difficulties.

Bernardo

On Tue, Jan 23, 2018 at 5:15 PM, Brian Upton <Brian.Upton@cskt.org> wrote:

Hi Bernardo,

I just wanted to let you know that Dale Becker has a conflict on the morning of Wednesday, March 7th so, if that were to be the week the alternatives workshop ends up being scheduled, he would miss the morning portion of the workshop but would otherwise be able to make the rest of the meetings including that afternoon. If that week is the best for everyone, we're still fine with the workshop being scheduled the week of March 5th but I just wanted you to be aware of Dale's situation. Thanks again for all of your time and effort in scheduling. Let me know if any questions.

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Branch of Planning and Policy

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From: Brian Upton
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: RE: alternatives workshop
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2018 10:38:27 AM

No need for apologies; I know how difficult scheduling can be when you have so many people/calendars to work with. We very much appreciated your efforts to reschedule the workshop earlier, and I'll try to get you a response from Dale now as soon as I can so you can finalize dates.

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2018 10:18 AM
To: Brian Upton
Subject: Re: alternatives workshop

Thank you very much Brian and I'm sorry to be insistent. I don't mean to but I'm trying to schedule the workshop so that all participants can make travel and work plans.

On Thu, Jan 25, 2018 at 10:15 AM, Brian Upton <Brian.Upton@cskt.org> wrote:
Not yet, but I just tried contacting him again and asked him to get back with me as soon as he can. I'll try again if I don't hear from him by this afternoon.

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2018 10:09 AM
To: Brian Upton
Subject: Re: alternatives workshop

Good morning Brian,

Have you had any news from Dale?

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From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Brian Upton
Subject: Re: alternatives workshop
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2018 10:43:10 AM

Thank you Brian

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> No need for apologies; I know how difficult scheduling can be when you have so many people/calendars to work with. We very much appreciated your efforts to reschedule the workshop earlier, and I'll try to get you a response from Dale now as soon as I can so you can finalize dates.
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From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Erika Wettergreen; Bernardo Garza
Subject: milestone
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2018 11:19:58 AM
Attachments: Schedule Milestones NBRC_10.31.17.docx

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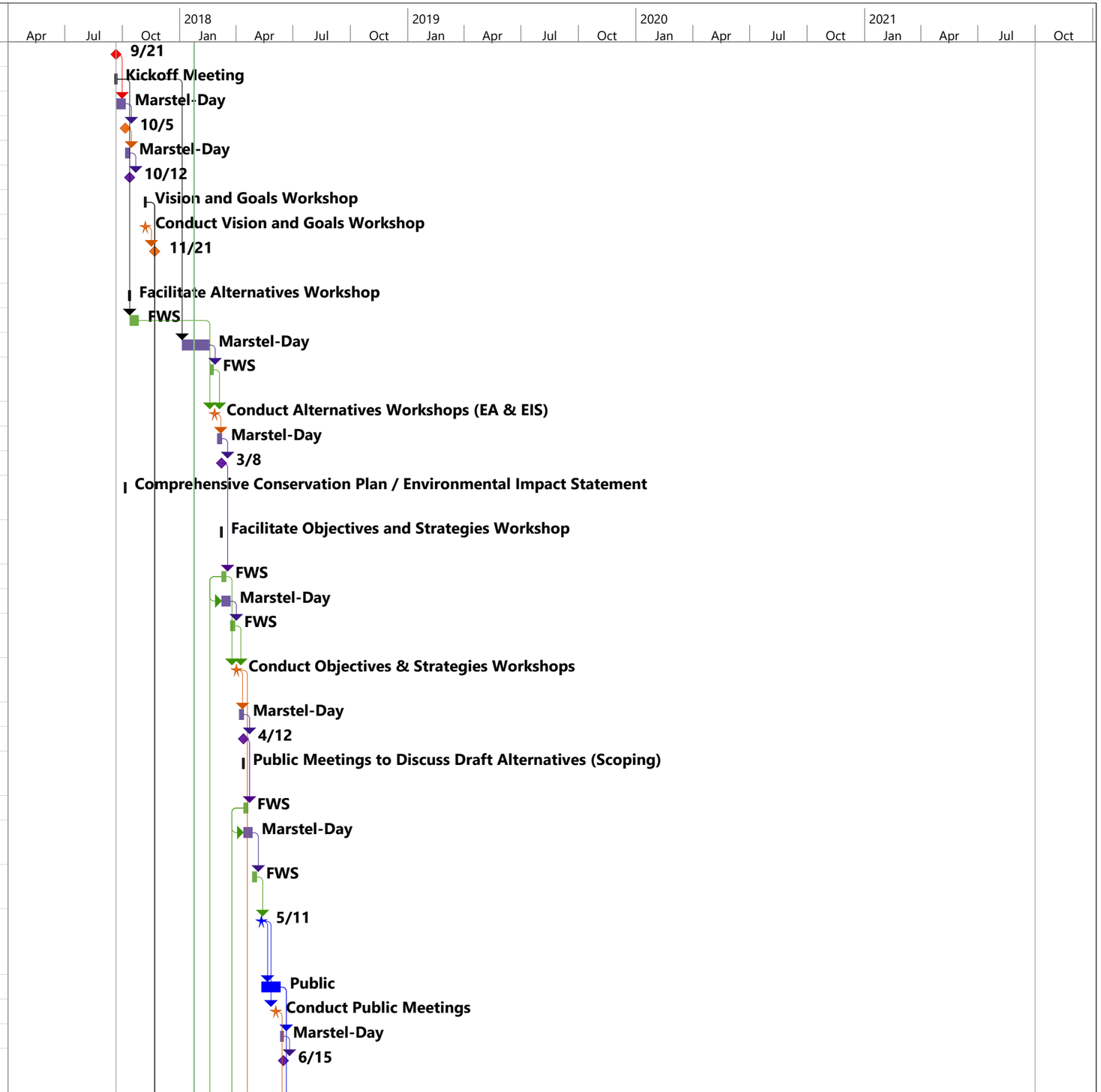
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

Schedule Milestones

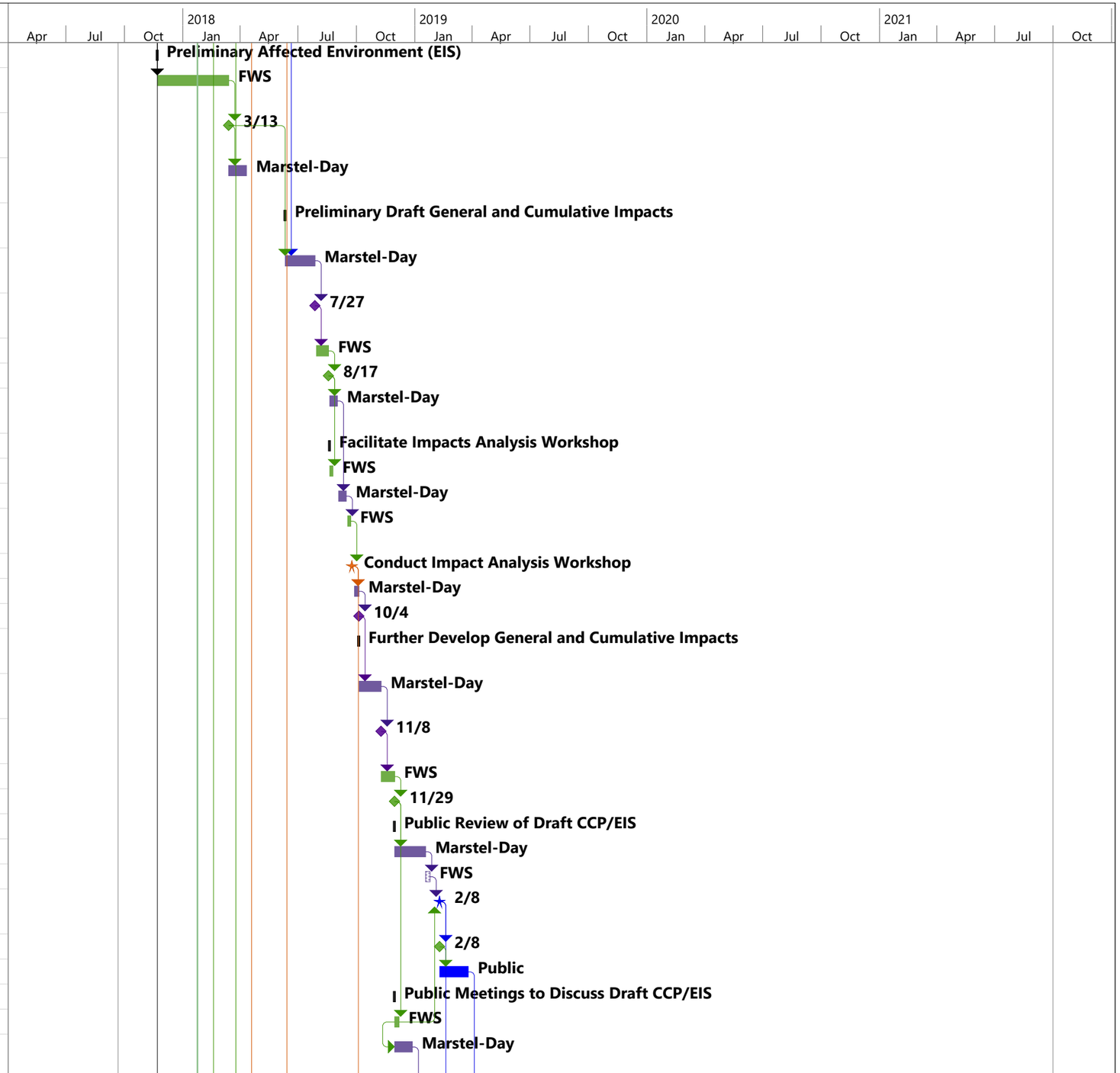
The following schedule provides an overall timeline for the project which is subject to change upon the agreement of the concurring and approving signatures.

Schedule Milestones	
TASK	**Target Completion Date**
Preplanning and Scoping - Publish Notice of Intent - Invitation to State, Tribes, and Cooperating Agencies - Initial meeting with Cooperating Agencies - Work Plan - Public Involvement Plan - Scoping Meetings - Scoping Report - Vision and Goals Workshop	October 31, 2017
Alternatives Development - Alternatives Development Workshops - Public Input on Draft Alternatives - Briefing Statements to Regional and National Directorate	April 15, 2018
Development of Draft CCP/EIS/EA - Objectives and Strategies Development Workshop - Environmental Analysis - Internal Review Draft CCP/EIS/EA - Meet with Cooperating Agencies; respond to comments - Notice of Availability; briefing statements - Public Review of Draft CCP/EIS/EA - Public Meetings	April 15, 2019
Development of Final CCP/EIS - Respond to Public Comments - Internal Review Final CCP/EIS - Notice of Availability; briefing statements - Publication of Final CCP/EIS; 30-day waiting period - Draft Record of Decision - Final Record of Decision - Notice of Availability of ROD - Printing of Final stand-alone CCPs - Completion of Administrative Record	June 1, 2020

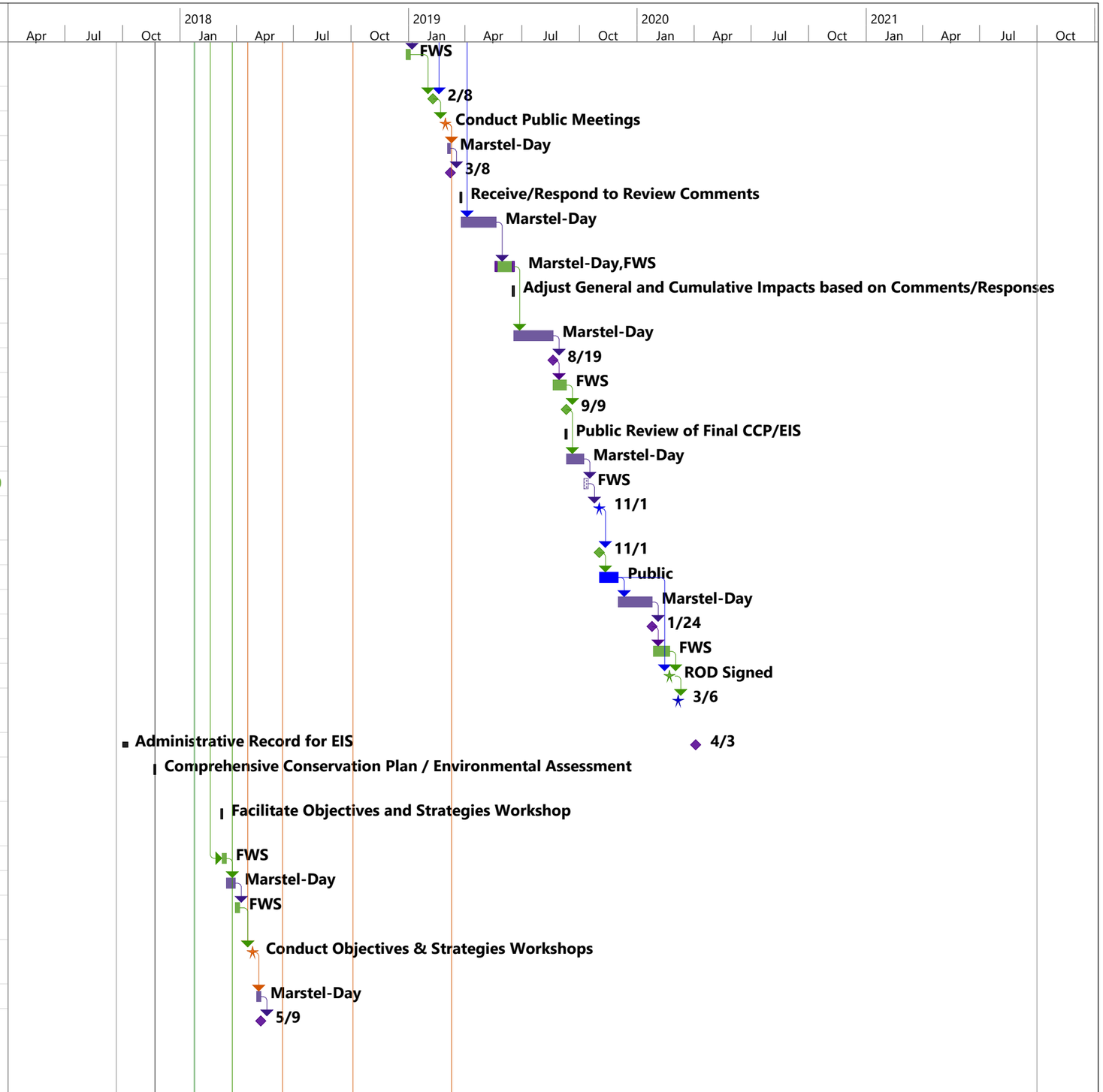
ID	Task Name	Duration	Start	Finish
1	Project Award	0 days	Thu 9/21/17	Thu 9/21/17
2	**Kickoff Meeting**	**16 days**	**Thu 9/21/17**	**Thu 10/12/17**
3	Prepare for Kickoff Meeting	11 days	Thu 9/21/17	Thu 10/5/17
4	Conduct Kickoff Meeting (teleconference)	0 days	Thu 10/5/17	Thu 10/5/17
5	Prepare Meeting Summary Report	5 days	Fri 10/6/17	Thu 10/12/17
6	Submit Meeting Summary Report	0 days	Thu 10/12/17	Thu 10/12/17
7	**Vision and Goals Workshop**	**11 days**	**Tue 11/7/17**	**Tue 11/21/17**
8	Conduct Vision and Goals Workshop	1 day	Tue 11/7/17	Tue 11/7/17
9	Provide Meeting Summary and Relevant Project Information to Marstel-Day	0 days	Tue 11/21/17	Tue 11/21/17
10	**Facilitate Alternatives Workshop**	**105 days**	**Fri 10/13/17**	**Thu 3/8/18**
11	Identify and Reserve Location	2 wks	Fri 10/13/17	Thu 10/26/17
12	Plan & Prepare Materials	31 days	Fri 1/5/18	Fri 2/16/18
13	Material Review & Workshop Organization Discussion	5 days	Mon 2/19/18	Fri 2/23/18
14	**Conduct Alternatives Workshops (EA & EIS)**	**4 days**	**Mon 2/26/18**	**Thu 3/1/18**
15	Prepare Meeting Summary Report	5 days	Fri 3/2/18	Thu 3/8/18
16	Submit Meeting Summary Report	0 days	Thu 3/8/18	Thu 3/8/18
17	**Comprehensive Conservation Plan / Environmental Impact Statement**	**651 days**	**Thu 10/5/17**	**Fri 4/3/20**
18	**Facilitate Objectives and Strategies Workshop**	**25 days**	**Fri 3/9/18**	**Thu 4/12/18**
19	Identify and Reserve Location	1 wk	Fri 3/9/18	Thu 3/15/18
20	Plan & Prepare Materials	2 wks	Fri 3/9/18	Thu 3/22/18
21	Material Review & Workshop Organization Discussion	5 days	Fri 3/23/18	Thu 3/29/18
22	**Conduct Objectives & Strategies Workshops**	**4 days**	**Mon 4/2/18**	**Thu 4/5/18**
23	Prepare Meeting Summary Report	5 days	Fri 4/6/18	Thu 4/12/18
24	Submit Meeting Summary Report	0 days	Thu 4/12/18	Thu 4/12/18
25	**Public Meetings to Discuss Draft Alternatives (Scoping)**	**46 days**	**Fri 4/13/18**	**Fri 6/15/18**
26	Identify and Reserve Location	1 wk	Fri 4/13/18	Thu 4/19/18
27	Plan, Prepare Materials & Comment Database	2 wks	Fri 4/13/18	Thu 4/26/18
28	Material Review & Meeting Organization Discussion	5 days	Fri 4/27/18	Thu 5/3/18
29	**Publish Notice of Intent to Prepare an EIS in Federal Register; Announce Public Scoping Meetings**	**0 days**	**Fri 5/11/18**	**Fri 5/11/18**
30	**Formal Scoping Period**	**30 edays**	**Fri 5/11/18**	**Sun 6/10/18**
31	**Conduct Public Meetings**	**1 day**	**Mon 6/4/18**	**Mon 6/4/18**
32	Prepare Meeting Summary Report	5 days	Mon 6/11/18	Fri 6/15/18
33	Submit Meeting Summary Report	0 days	Fri 6/15/18	Fri 6/15/18



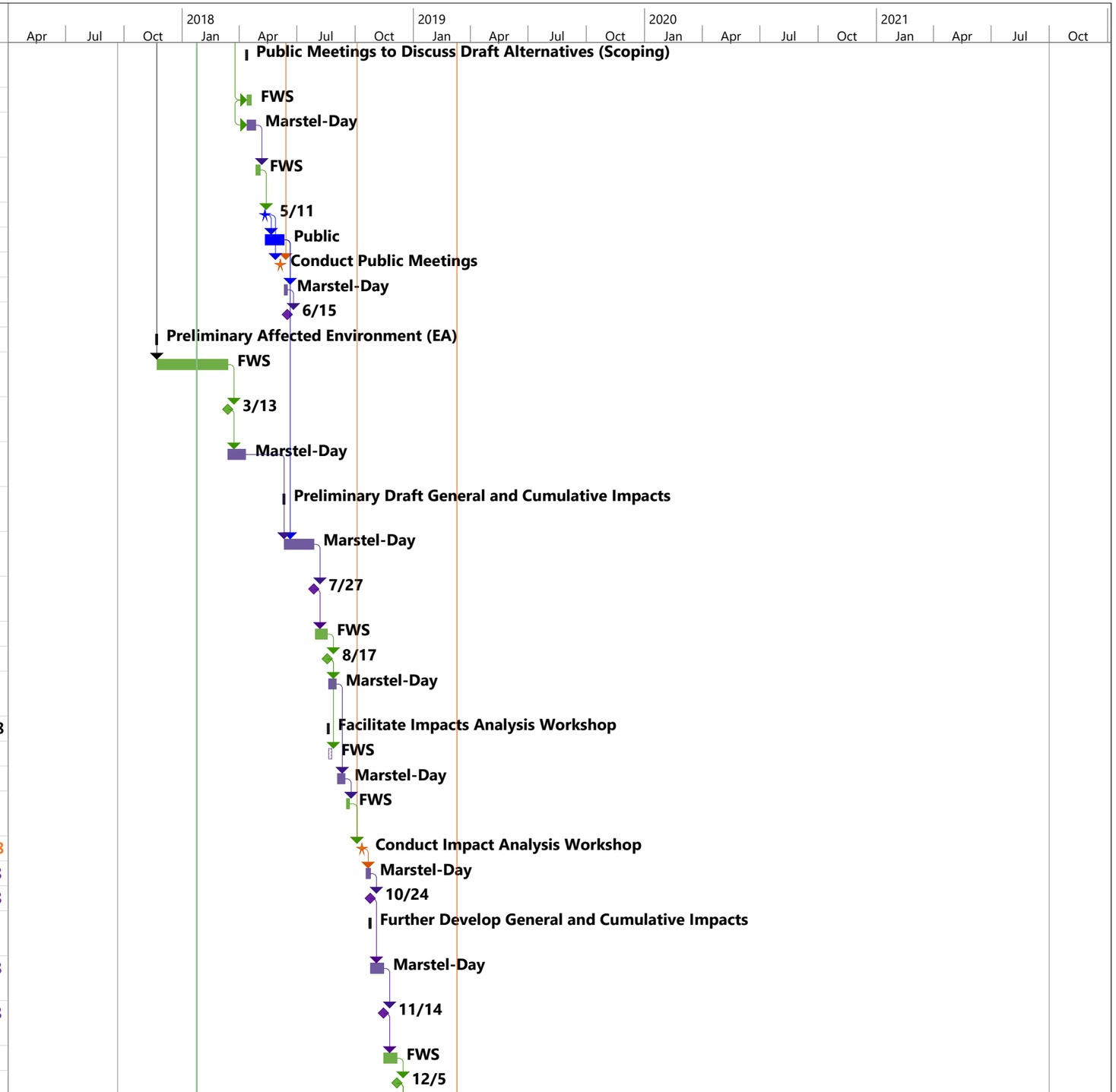
ID	Task Name	Duration	Start	Finish
34	**Preliminary Affected Environment (EIS)**	**100 days**	**Wed 11/22/17**	**Tue 4/10/18**
35	Prepare Preliminary Affected Environment	4 mons	Wed 11/22/17	Tue 3/13/18
36	Provide Preliminary Affected Environment to Marstel-Day	0 days	Tue 3/13/18	Tue 3/13/18
37	Review Affected Environment, seek clarification, if needed	4 wks	Wed 3/14/18	Tue 4/10/18
38	**Preliminary Draft General and Cumulative Impacts**	**60 days**	**Mon 6/11/18**	**Fri 8/31/18**
39	Prepare Preliminary Draft General & Cumulative Impacts for EIS	7 wks	Mon 6/11/18	Fri 7/27/18
40	**Submit Preliminary Draft General & Cumulative Impacts for EIS**	**0 days**	**Fri 7/27/18**	**Fri 7/27/18**
41	Government Review Period	3 wks	Mon 7/30/18	Fri 8/17/18
42	Receive Comments from FWS	0 days	Fri 8/17/18	Fri 8/17/18
43	Integrate Comments into Impacts Analysis	2 wks	Mon 8/20/18	Fri 8/31/18
44	**Facilitate Impacts Analysis Workshop**	**34 days**	**Mon 8/20/18**	**Thu 10/4/18**
45	Identify and Reserve Location	1 wk	Mon 8/20/18	Fri 8/24/18
46	Plan & Prepare Materials	2 wks	Mon 9/3/18	Fri 9/14/18
47	Material Review & Workshop Organization Discussion	5 days	Mon 9/17/18	Fri 9/21/18
48	**Conduct Impact Analysis Workshop**	**4 days**	**Mon 9/24/18**	**Thu 9/27/18**
49	Prepare Meeting Summary Report	5 days	Fri 9/28/18	Thu 10/4/18
50	Submit Meeting Summary Report	0 days	Thu 10/4/18	Thu 10/4/18
51	**Further Develop General and Cumulative Impacts**	**40 days**	**Fri 10/5/18**	**Thu 11/29/18**
52	Prepare Interim Draft General & Cumulative Impacts for EIS	5 wks	Fri 10/5/18	Thu 11/8/18
53	**Submit Interim Draft General & Cumulative Impacts for EIS**	**0 days**	**Thu 11/8/18**	**Thu 11/8/18**
54	Government Review Period	3 wks	Fri 11/9/18	Thu 11/29/18
55	Receive Comments from FWS	0 days	Thu 11/29/18	Thu 11/29/18
56	**Public Review of Draft CCP/EIS**	**82 days**	**Fri 11/30/18**	**Mon 3/25/19**
57	Prepare Public Draft CCP/EIS	7 wks	Fri 11/30/18	Thu 1/17/19
58	Approve Public Draft EIS for publication	1 wk	Fri 1/18/19	Thu 1/24/19
59	**Publish Notice of Availability in Federal Register; Distribute Copies to USEPA**	**0 days**	**Fri 2/8/19**	**Fri 2/8/19**
60	Distribute Public Draft EIS	0 days	Fri 2/8/19	Fri 2/8/19
61	**Public Review Period**	**45 edays**	**Fri 2/8/19**	**Mon 3/25/19**
62	**Public Meetings to Discuss Draft CCP/EIS**	**71 days**	**Fri 11/30/18**	**Fri 3/8/19**
63	Identify and Reserve Location	1 wk	Fri 11/30/18	Thu 12/6/18
64	Plan, Prepare Materials & Comment Database	4 wks	Fri 11/30/18	Thu 12/27/18



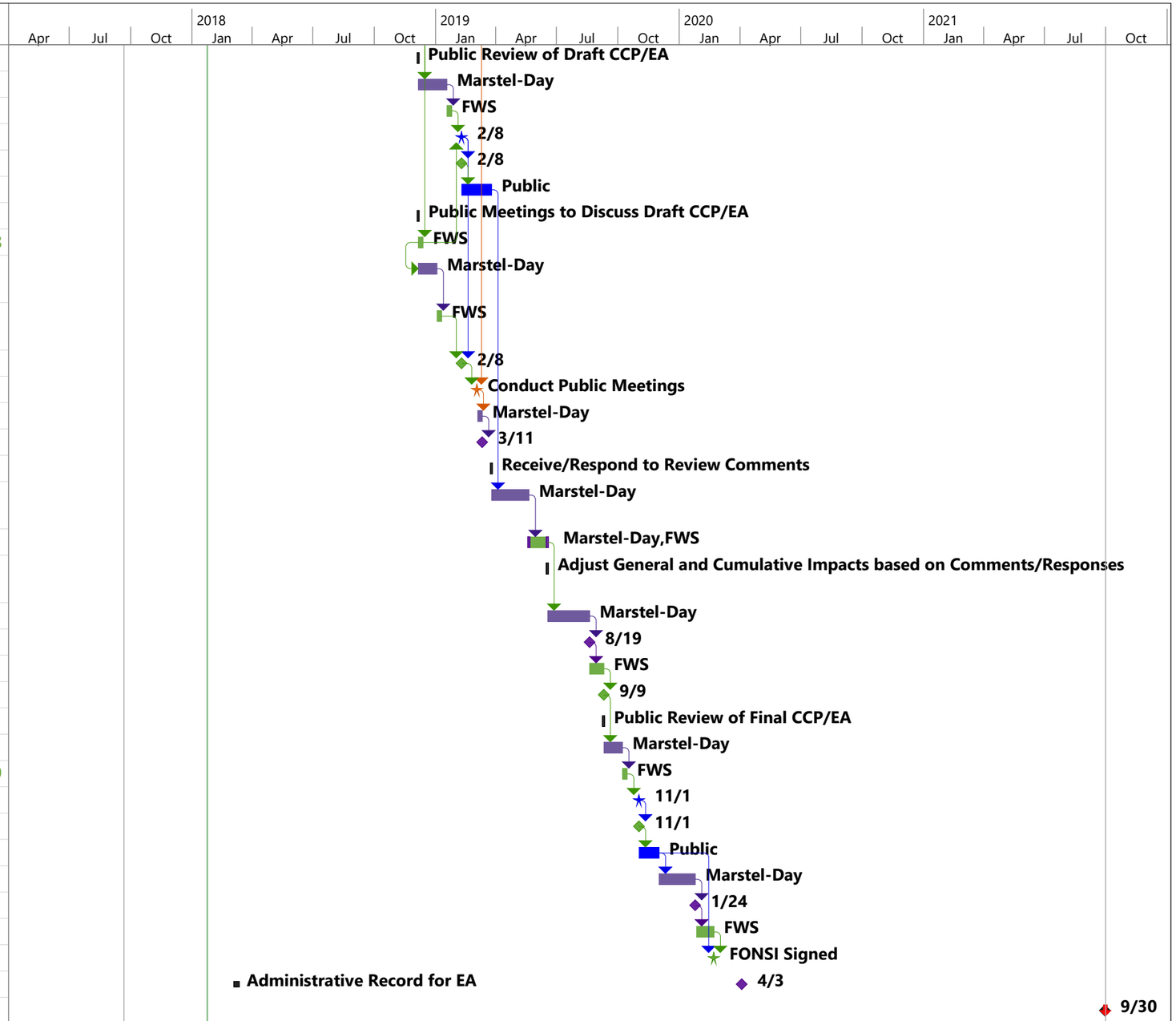
ID	Task Name	Duration	Start	Finish
65	Material Review & Meeting Organization Discussion	5 days	Fri 12/28/18	Thu 1/3/19
66	Announce Public Scoping Meetings	0 days	Fri 2/8/19	Fri 2/8/19
67	**Conduct Public Meetings**	**1 day**	**Fri 3/1/19**	**Fri 3/1/19**
68	Prepare Meeting Summary Report	5 days	Mon 3/4/19	Fri 3/8/19
69	Submit Meeting Summary Report	0 days	Fri 3/8/19	Fri 3/8/19
70	**Receive/Respond to Review Comments**	**60 days**	**Tue 3/26/19**	**Mon 6/17/19**
71	Compile all Public Comments in Database, Begin Responses	8 wks	Tue 3/26/19	Mon 5/20/19
72	Finalize Responses	4 wks	Tue 5/21/19	Mon 6/17/19
73	**Adjust General and Cumulative Impacts based on Comments/Responses**	**60 days**	**Tue 6/18/19**	**Mon 9/9/19**
74	Prepare Preliminary Final CCP/EIS	9 wks	Tue 6/18/19	Mon 8/19/19
75	**Submit Preliminary Final CCP/EIS**	**0 days**	**Mon 8/19/19**	**Mon 8/19/19**
76	Government Review Period	3 wks	Tue 8/20/19	Mon 9/9/19
77	Receive Comments from FWS	0 days	Mon 9/9/19	Mon 9/9/19
78	**Public Review of Final CCP/EIS**	**129 days**	**Tue 9/10/19**	**Fri 3/6/20**
79	Prepare Public Final CCP/EIS	4 wks	Tue 9/10/19	Mon 10/7/19
80	Approve Public Final EIS for publication	1 wk	Tue 10/8/19	Mon 10/14/19
81	**Publish Notice of Availability in Federal Register; Distribute Copies to USEPA**	**0 days**	**Fri 11/1/19**	**Fri 11/1/19**
82	Distribute Public Final EIS	0 days	Fri 11/1/19	Fri 11/1/19
83	**Public Review Period**	**30 edays**	**Fri 11/1/19**	**Sun 12/1/19**
84	Prepare Draft ROD	8 wks	Mon 12/2/19	Fri 1/24/20
85	Submit Draft ROD to FWS	0 days	Fri 1/24/20	Fri 1/24/20
86	Staff ROD Signature	4 wks	Mon 1/27/20	Fri 2/21/20
87	ROD Signed	0 days	Fri 2/21/20	Fri 2/21/20
88	**Publish Notice of Availability in Federal Register for the Signed ROD**	**0 days**	**Fri 3/6/20**	**Fri 3/6/20**
89	**Administrative Record for EIS**	**651 days**	**Thu 10/5/17**	**Fri 4/3/20**
93	**Comprehensive Conservation Plan / Environmental Assessment**	**618 days**	**Wed 11/22/17**	**Fri 4/3/20**
94	**Facilitate Objectives and Strategies Workshop**	**44 days**	**Fri 3/9/18**	**Wed 5/9/18**
95	Identify and Reserve Location	1 wk	Fri 3/9/18	Thu 3/15/18
96	Plan & Prepare Materials	2 wks	Fri 3/16/18	Thu 3/29/18
97	Material Review & Workshop Organization Discussion	5 days	Fri 3/30/18	Thu 4/5/18
98	**Conduct Objectives & Strategies Workshops**	**4 days**	**Fri 4/27/18**	**Wed 5/2/18**
99	Prepare Meeting Summary Report	5 days	Thu 5/3/18	Wed 5/9/18
100	Submit Meeting Summary Report	0 days	Wed 5/9/18	Wed 5/9/18



ID	Task Name	Duration	Start	Finish
101	**Public Meetings to Discuss Draft Alternatives (Scoping)**	**46 days**	**Fri 4/13/18**	**Fri 6/15/18**
102	Identify and Reserve Location	1 wk	Fri 4/13/18	Thu 4/19/18
103	Plan, Prepare Materials & Comment Database	2 wks	Fri 4/13/18	Thu 4/26/18
104	Material Review & Meeting Organization Discussion	5 days	Fri 4/27/18	Thu 5/3/18
105	**Announce Public Scoping Meetings**	**0 days**	**Fri 5/11/18**	**Fri 5/11/18**
106	**Formal Scoping Period**	**30 edays**	**Fri 5/11/18**	**Sun 6/10/18**
107	**Conduct Public Meetings**	**1 day**	**Tue 6/5/18**	**Tue 6/5/18**
108	Prepare Meeting Summary Report	5 days	Mon 6/11/18	Fri 6/15/18
109	Submit Meeting Summary Report	0 days	Fri 6/15/18	Fri 6/15/18
110	**Preliminary Affected Environment (EA)**	**100 days**	**Wed 11/22/17**	**Tue 4/10/18**
111	Prepare Preliminary Affected Environment	4 mons	Wed 11/22/17	Tue 3/13/18
112	Provide Preliminary Affected Environment to Marstel-Day	0 days	Tue 3/13/18	Tue 3/13/18
113	Review Affected Environment, seek clarification, if needed	4 wks	Wed 3/14/18	Tue 4/10/18
114	**Preliminary Draft General and Cumulative Impacts**	**60 days**	**Mon 6/11/18**	**Fri 8/31/18**
115	Prepare Preliminary Draft General & Cumulative Impacts for EA	7 wks	Mon 6/11/18	Fri 7/27/18
116	Submit Preliminary Draft General & Cumulative Impacts for EA	0 days	Fri 7/27/18	Fri 7/27/18
117	Government Review Period	3 wks	Mon 7/30/18	Fri 8/17/18
118	Receive Comments from FWS	0 days	Fri 8/17/18	Fri 8/17/18
119	Integrate Comments into Impacts Analysis	2 wks	Mon 8/20/18	Fri 8/31/18
120	**Facilitate Impacts Analysis Workshop**	**48 days**	**Mon 8/20/18**	**Wed 10/24/18**
121	Identify and Reserve Location	1 wk	Mon 8/20/18	Fri 8/24/18
122	Plan & Prepare Materials	2 wks	Mon 9/3/18	Fri 9/14/18
123	Material Review & Workshop Organization Discussion	5 days	Mon 9/17/18	Fri 9/21/18
124	**Conduct Impact Analysis Workshop**	**4 days**	**Fri 10/12/18**	**Wed 10/17/18**
125	Prepare Meeting Summary Report	5 days	Thu 10/18/18	Wed 10/24/18
126	Submit Meeting Summary Report	0 days	Wed 10/24/18	Wed 10/24/18
127	**Further Develop General and Cumulative Impacts**	**30 days**	**Thu 10/25/18**	**Wed 12/5/18**
128	Prepare Interim Draft General & Cumulative Impacts for EA	3 wks	Thu 10/25/18	Wed 11/14/18
129	Submit Interim Draft General & Cumulative Impacts for EA	0 days	Wed 11/14/18	Wed 11/14/18
130	Government Review Period	3 wks	Thu 11/15/18	Wed 12/5/18
131	Receive Comments from FWS	0 days	Wed 12/5/18	Wed 12/5/18



ID	Task Name	Duration	Start	Finish
132	**Public Review of Draft CCP/EA**	**78 days**	**Thu 12/6/18**	**Mon 3/25/19**
133	Prepare Public Draft CCP/EA	31 days	Thu 12/6/18	Thu 1/17/19
134	Approve Public Draft EA for publication	1 wk	Fri 1/18/19	Thu 1/24/19
135	**Announce Availability of Draft EA**	**0 days**	**Fri 2/8/19**	**Fri 2/8/19**
136	Distribute Public Draft EA	0 days	Fri 2/8/19	Fri 2/8/19
137	**Public Review Period**	**45 edays**	**Fri 2/8/19**	**Mon 3/25/19**
138	**Public Meetings to Discuss Draft CCP/EA**	**68 days**	**Thu 12/6/18**	**Mon 3/11/19**
139	Identify and Reserve Location	1 wk	Thu 12/6/18	Wed 12/12/18
140	Plan, Prepare Materials & Comment Database	4 wks	Thu 12/6/18	Wed 1/2/19
141	Material Review & Meeting Organization Discussion	5 days	Thu 1/3/19	Wed 1/9/19
142	Announce Public Scoping Meetings	0 days	Fri 2/8/19	Fri 2/8/19
143	**Conduct Public Meetings**	**1 day**	**Mon 3/4/19**	**Mon 3/4/19**
144	Prepare Meeting Summary Report	5 days	Tue 3/5/19	Mon 3/11/19
145	Submit Meeting Summary Report	0 days	Mon 3/11/19	Mon 3/11/19
146	**Receive/Respond to Review Comments**	**60 days**	**Tue 3/26/19**	**Mon 6/17/19**
147	Compile all Public Comments in Database, Begin Responses	8 wks	Tue 3/26/19	Mon 5/20/19
148	Finalize Responses	4 wks	Tue 5/21/19	Mon 6/17/19
149	**Adjust General and Cumulative Impacts based on Comments/Responses**	**60 days**	**Tue 6/18/19**	**Mon 9/9/19**
150	Prepare Preliminary Final CCP/EA	9 wks	Tue 6/18/19	Mon 8/19/19
151	**Submit Preliminary Final CCP/EA**	**0 days**	**Mon 8/19/19**	**Mon 8/19/19**
152	Government Review Period	3 wks	Tue 8/20/19	Mon 9/9/19
153	Receive Comments from FWS	0 days	Mon 9/9/19	Mon 9/9/19
154	**Public Review of Final CCP/EA**	**119 days**	**Tue 9/10/19**	**Fri 2/21/20**
155	Prepare Public Final CCP/EA	4 wks	Tue 9/10/19	Mon 10/7/19
156	Approve Public Final EA for publication	1 wk	Tue 10/8/19	Mon 10/14/19
157	**Announce Availability of Final EA**	**0 days**	**Fri 11/1/19**	**Fri 11/1/19**
158	Distribute Public Final EA	0 days	Fri 11/1/19	Fri 11/1/19
159	**Public Review Period**	**30 edays**	**Fri 11/1/19**	**Sun 12/1/19**
160	Prepare Draft FONSI	8 wks	Mon 12/2/19	Fri 1/24/20
161	Submit Draft FONSI to FWS	0 days	Fri 1/24/20	Fri 1/24/20
162	Staff FONSI Signature	4 wks	Mon 1/27/20	Fri 2/21/20
163	FONSI Signed	0 days	Fri 2/21/20	Fri 2/21/20
164	**Administrative Record for EA**	**541 days**	**Thu 3/8/18**	**Fri 4/3/20**
168	End of the Period of Performance	0 days	Thu 9/30/21	Thu 9/30/21



From: Erika Wettergreen
To: Fields, Vanessa; Bernardo Garza
Subject: NBRC MD schedule
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2018 11:25:58 AM
Attachments: Bison Range CCP and NEPA_2018-01-24.pdf

ORDER FOR SUPPLIES OR SERVICES

PAGE 1 OF PAGES 4

IMPORTANT: Mark all packages and papers with contract and/or order numbers.

1. DATE OF ORDER: 09/21/2017

2. CONTRACT NO. *(If any)*: GS-00F-070CA

3. ORDER NO.: F17PD02031

4. REQUISITION/REFERENCE NO.: 0040342466

5. ISSUING OFFICE *(Address correspondence to)*:
FWS, DIVISION OF CONTRACTING AND GE
LAKE PLAZA NORTH
134 UNION BOULEVARD
LAKEWOOD CO 80228-1807

6. SHIP TO:

a. NAME OF CONSIGNEE: FWS BRANCH OF PLANNING

b. STREET ADDRESS: DENVER FEDERAL CENTER
P.O. BOX 25486

c. CITY: DENVER

d. STATE: CO

e. ZIP CODE: 80225-0486

7. TO: Elizabeth Powell

a. NAME OF CONTRACTOR: MARSTEL-DAY, LLC

b. COMPANY NAME:

c. STREET ADDRESS: 417 WOLFE ST

d. CITY: FREDERICKSBURG

e. STATE: VA

f. ZIP CODE: 22401-5947

f. SHIP VIA:

8. TYPE OF ORDER

☐ a. PURCHASE
REFERENCE YOUR:

Please furnish the following on the terms and conditions specified on both sides of this order and on the attached sheet, if any, including delivery as indicated.

☒ b. DELIVERY

Except for billing instructions on the reverse, this delivery order is subject to instructions contained on this side only of this form and is issued subject to the terms and conditions of the above-numbered contract.

9. ACCOUNTING AND APPROPRIATION DATA: 01

10. REQUISITIONING OFFICE: FWS BRANCH OF PLANNING

11. BUSINESS CLASSIFICATION *(Check appropriate box(es))*

☒ a. SMALL ☐ b. OTHER THAN SMALL ☐ c. DISADVANTAGED ☒ d. WOMEN-OWNED ☐ e. HUBZone

☐ f. SERVICE-DISABLED VETERAN-OWNED ☐ g. WOMEN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESS (WOSB) ELIGIBLE UNDER THE WOSB PROGRAM ☐ h. EDWOSB

12. F.O.B. POINT: Destination

13. PLACE OF
a. INSPECTION: Destination
b. ACCEPTANCE: Destination

14. GOVERNMENT B/L NO.:

15. DELIVER TO F.O.B. POINT ON OR BEFORE *(Date)*: 09/30/2021

16. DISCOUNT TERMS: ACCP

17. SCHEDULE ***(See reverse for Rejections)***

ITEM NO. (a)	SUPPLIES OR SERVICES (b)	QUANTITY ORDERED (c)	UNIT (d)	UNIT PRICE (e)	AMOUNT (f)	QUANTITY ACCEPTED (g)
	Contract DUNS: 038090390 This task order is being issued for Comprehensive Conservation Plan Services in accordance with the statement of work dated July 13, 2017. The contractor shall provide Continued ...					

SEE BILLING INSTRUCTIONS ON REVERSE

18. SHIPPING POINT:

19. GROSS SHIPPING WEIGHT:

20. INVOICE NO.:

17(h) TOTAL *(Cont. pages)*: $160,436.00

21. MAIL INVOICE TO:

a. NAME: Invoice Processing Platform System

b. STREET ADDRESS (or P.O. Box): US Department of Treasury
http://www.ipp.gov

c. CITY:

d. STATE:

e. ZIP CODE:

17(i) GRAND TOTAL: $160,436.00

22. UNITED STATES OF AMERICA BY *(Signature)*

23. NAME *(Typed)*: Terri Ferguson
TITLE: CONTRACTING/ORDERING OFFICER

IMPORTANT: Mark all packages and papers with contract and/or order numbers.

DATE OF ORDER	CONTRACT NO.	ORDER NO.
09/21/2017	GS-00F-070CA	F17PD02031

ITEM NO. (a)	SUPPLIES/SERVICES (b)	QUANTITY ORDERED (c)	UNIT (d)	UNIT PRICE (e)	AMOUNT (f)	QUANTITY ACCEPTED (g)
	assistance in facilitation and environmental analysis as part of development of the CCPs for the National Bison Range Complex. This is a fixed-price task order for a base period of 18 months and two 12-month option periods. Contractor is authorized to submit monthly progress invoices for payment. At a minimum, invoices shall outline task worked, hours, position and percentage or progress made on that task to date. Technical POC: Bernardo Garza at 303-236-4377 or bernardo_garza@fws.gov Legacy Doc #: FWS Invoice Review Required: Y Admin Office: FWS, DIVISION OF CONTRACTING AND GE LAKE PLAZA NORTH 134 UNION BOULEVARD Lakewood CO 80228-1807 Account Assignm: K G/L Account: 6100.252R0 Business Area: F000 Commitment Item: 252R00 Cost Center: FF06R06000 Functional Area: FRS126100.000000 Fund: 178F1611MD Fund Center: FF06R06000 Project/WBS: FX.RS12610600000 PR Acct Assign: 01 Period of Performance: 10/01/2017 to 09/30/2021					
00010	Comprehensive Conservation Plan Services The following services shall be provided in accordance with the SOW and the contractor's proposal dated 8/4/2017: General Administrative Costs: $22,546.55 Alternatives Workshop (Task #3): $14,361.14 Objectives & Strategies Workshop (Task #4): $35,327.99 Impacts Workshop (Task #5): $35,340.19 Public Meetings (Tasks 6&7): $33,365.67 Continued ...				160,436.00	

TOTAL CARRIED FORWARD TO 1ST PAGE (ITEM 17(H)) $160,436.00

IMPORTANT: Mark all packages and papers with contract and/or order numbers.

DATE OF ORDER	CONTRACT NO.	ORDER NO.
09/21/2017	GS-00F-070CA	F17PD02031

ITEM NO. (a)	SUPPLIES/SERVICES (b)	QUANTITY ORDERED (c)	UNIT (d)	UNIT PRICE (e)	AMOUNT (f)	QUANTITY ACCEPTED (g)
	OPTIONAL TASKS Funds in the amount of $19,494.46 are currently available for these tasks. Additional funds will be provided as they become available. The contractor is only obligated to provide services and the Government is only obligated to pay for services up to the current level of funding. NEPA Analysis-Impacts (Task #8): $33,354.47 NEPA Analysis-Comments (Task #9): $40,837.03 Comment Analysis (Task #10): $25,572.10 Questions concerning this order shall be directed to Terri Ferguson at 303-236-4321 or terri_ferguson@fws.gov The total amount of award: $160,436.00. The obligation for this award is shown in box 17(i).					

TOTAL CARRIED FORWARD TO 1ST PAGE (ITEM 17(H)) $0.00

52.217-8 Option to Extend Services. (NOV 1999)
52.217-9 Option to Extend the Term of the Contract.
Electronic Invoicing and Payment Requirements - Invoice Processing Platform (IPP) (April 2013)

52.217-8 Option to Extend Services. (NOV 1999)

The Government may require continued performance of any services within the limits and at the rates specified in the contract. These rates may be adjusted only as a result of revisions to prevailing labor rates provided by the Secretary of Labor. The option provision may be exercised more than once, but the total extension of performance hereunder shall not exceed 6 months. The Contracting Officer may exercise the option by written notice to the Contractor within five days.

(End of clause)

52.217-9 Option to Extend the Term of the Contract. (MAR 2000)

(a) The Government may extend the term of this contract by written notice to the Contractor within 5 days; provided that the Government gives the Contractor a preliminary written notice of its intent to extend at least [15]days before the contract expires. The preliminary notice does not commit the Government to an extension.

(b) If the Government exercises this option, the extended contract shall be considered to include this option clause.

(c) The total duration of this contract, including the exercise of any options under this clause, shall not exceed [42] months.

(End of clause)

Electronic Invoicing and Payment Requirements - Invoice Processing Platform (IPP) (April 2013)

Payment requests must be submitted electronically through the U. S. Department of the Treasury's Invoice Processing Platform System (IPP).

"Payment request" means any request for contract financing payment or invoice payment by the Contractor. To constitute a proper invoice, the payment request must comply with the requirements identified in the applicable Prompt Payment clause included in the contract, or the clause 52.212-4 Contract Terms and Conditions - Commercial Items included in commercial item contracts. The IPP website address is: https://www.ipp.gov.
Under this contract, the following documents are required to be submitted as an attachment to the IPP invoice [CO to edit and include the documentation required under this contract]:

The Contractor must use the IPP website to register, access and use IPP for submitting requests for payment. The Contractor Government Business Point of Contact (as listed in SAM will receive enrollment instructions via email from the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston (FRBB) within 3 - 5 business days of the contract award date. Contractor assistance with enrollment can be obtained by contacting the IPP Production Helpdesk via email ippgroup@bos.frb.org or phone (866) 973-3131.

If the Contractor is unable to comply with the requirement to use IPP for submitting invoices for payment, the Contractor must submit a waiver request in writing to the Contracting Officer with its proposal or quotation.

(End of Clause)

From: Erika Wettergreen
To: Bernardo Garza; Fields, Vanessa
Subject: Award
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2018 11:40:54 AM
Attachments: F17PD02031-CCP Services Award.pdf

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Pat Jamieson
Subject: NBRC Alternatives Workshop scheduling
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2018 2:06:42 PM

Hello Pat,

We continue to find it very challenging to schedule the alternatives workshop for the NBRC CCPs.

Can you tell me your availability to participate in the workshop if we were schedule it on the week of Feb. 26 - March 2, and March 5 - 9? What days of those weeks would work for you?

Thank you

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: David Redhorse
Subject: Bison Range Alternatives Workshop
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2018 2:11:42 PM

Good afternoon David,

We continue to find it very challenging to schedule the alternatives workshop for the NBRC CCPs.

Can you tell me your availability to participate in the workshop if we were schedule it on the week of Feb. 26 - March 2, and March 5 - 9? What days of those weeks would work for you?

Thank you

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: bisonbird
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: NBRC Alternatives Workshop scheduling
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2018 3:04:59 PM

Hi Bernardo

I need to be in Portland for an Art Show on March 10th (Sat) and would like to travel over on Thursday March 8th (to have a day to set up for the show). I could be around for the meetings on that date but would HAVE to leave on Friday, March 9th. I would prefer to travel the day before. Other than that, the other days are free and clear.

My preference would be for the earlier (Feb 26-March 2). And, I know it wouldn't be so good for you, but I have no problem with working the weekend before or between (just not after).

Good luck with setting us up.....

Pat Jamieson

On 2018-01-25 14:06, Garza, Bernardo wrote:
> Hello Pat,
>
> We continue to find it very challenging to schedule the alternatives
> workshop for the NBRC CCPs.
>
> Can you tell me your availability to participate in the workshop if we
> were schedule it on the week of Feb. 26 - March 2, and March 5 - 9?
> What days of those weeks would work for you?
>
> Thank you
>
> --
>
> BERNARDO GARZA
> PLANNING TEAM LEADER
> BRANCH OF PLANNING AND POLICY
>
> U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE, MOUNTAIN-PRAIRIE REGION
> OFFICE (303) 236-4377
> FAX (303) 236-4792

From: Brian Upton
To: Garza, Bernardo
Cc: Dale Becker
Subject: RE: alternatives workshop
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2018 5:21:16 PM

Hi Bernardo,

I just spoke with Dale. March 7-9 (Wed-Fri) would work best for us. I will be out of state on February 26th, so I'd prefer not to have the workshop start on that day if at all possible. Thank you for your work and your patience.

BU

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2018 10:43 AM
To: Brian Upton
Subject: Re: alternatives workshop

Thank you Brian

On Thu, Jan 25, 2018 at 10:38 AM, Brian Upton <Brian.Upton@cskt.org> wrote:
No need for apologies; I know how difficult scheduling can be when you have so many people/calendars to work with. We very much appreciated your efforts to reschedule the workshop earlier, and I'll try to get you a response from Dale now as soon as I can so you can finalize dates.

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2018 10:18 AM
To: Brian Upton
Subject: Re: alternatives workshop

Thank you very much Brian and I'm sorry to be insistent. I don't mean to but I'm trying to schedule the workshop so that all participants can make travel and work plans.

On Thu, Jan 25, 2018 at 10:15 AM, Brian Upton <Brian.Upton@cskt.org> wrote:
Not yet, but I just tried contacting him again and asked him to get back with me as soon as he can. I'll try again if I don't hear from him by this afternoon.

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2018 10:09 AM
To: Brian Upton
Subject: Re: alternatives workshop

Good morning Brian,

Have you had any news from Dale?

On Wed, Jan 24, 2018 at 10:54 AM, Brian Upton <Brian.Upton@cskt.org> wrote:
Thank you Bernardo. Dale is on leave right now, but I will try to reach him and get you some feedback as soon as possible.

From: Garza, Bernardo [mailto:bernardo_garza@fws.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2018 10:21 AM
To: Brian Upton; Dale Becker
Subject: Re: alternatives workshop

Good morning Brian,

Thank you for letting me know about Dale Becker's scheduling conflict during the week of March 5.

We are also having issues with the schedule for some of the members of the National Bison Range Complex. So I would like to ask you and Dale if the following might work for both of you.

The most recent days that we proposed to do the workshop are February 27 through March 1, or March 6 – 8. If we were to move those dates slightly, to either February 26 - 28 (Monday through Wednesday), or March 7 – 9 (Wednesday through Friday), would either one of those set of dates work for you and Dale?

Please let me know and thank you for your patience with the scheduling difficulties.

Bernardo

On Tue, Jan 23, 2018 at 5:15 PM, Brian Upton <Brian.Upton@cskt.org> wrote:
Hi Bernardo,

I just wanted to let you know that Dale Becker has a conflict on the morning of Wednesday, March 7th so, if that were to be the week the alternatives workshop ends up being scheduled, he would miss the morning portion of the workshop but would otherwise be able to make the rest of the meetings including that afternoon. If that week is the best for everyone, we're still fine with the workshop being scheduled the week of March 5th but I just wanted you to be aware of Dale's situation. Thanks again for all of your time and effort in scheduling. Let me know if any questions.

BU

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377

Fax (303) 236-4792

--

Bernardo Garza
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--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Vanessa Fields
Subject: CSKT response
Date: Friday, January 26, 2018 8:48:14 AM

Hi Vanessa,

I think we have the final piece of the puzzle thanks to the following reply from Brian Upton:

Hi Bernardo,

I just spoke with Dale. March 7-9 (Wed-Fri) would work best for us. I will be out of state on February 26th, so I'd prefer not to have the workshop start on that day if at all possible. Thank you for your work and your patience.

Let's chat today at your earliest convenience to firm up the date of the workshop.

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Erika Wettergreen
Subject: Final(?) dates for Bison Range Workshop
Date: Friday, January 26, 2018 9:30:47 AM

Hi Erika-

It looks like March 7-9th will work for just about everyone for the Alternatives workshop. That is Wed-Friday that week. Bernardo and I just wanted to double check that those dates definitely work for you before we send out what is hopefully the final email on this!

Thanks!

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Ryan Moehring; Bernardo Garza
Subject: NBRC Public Engagement follow up - response needed
Date: Friday, January 26, 2018 9:48:41 AM

Ryan/Bernardo-

Bernardo and I have been consumed this week with getting the Alternatives workshop rescheduled, but we need to follow up on the public engagement discussion with Will and Mo last week.

The most pressing thing I have in my notes is that Will wanted an up-to-date briefing statement completed by next **Wednesday, January 31st.**

I have not done these before, so I don't have an up-to-date copy of the template and I do not know how the three of us want to approach these. Ryan are you usually involved in preparing these or is this something for Bernardo and I? I am happy to take the first stab at one if someone can point me to the proper format/template.

If we need to have a short discussion about this, let me know and I can schedule a time.

Thanks!

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Erika Wettergreen
To: Fields, Vanessa
Subject: RE: Final(?) dates for Bison Range Workshop
Date: Friday, January 26, 2018 9:55:52 AM

Hi Vanessa,

Those dates work for me.

Thanks!

From: Fields, Vanessa [mailto:vanessa_fields@fws.gov]
Sent: Friday, January 26, 2018 11:31 AM
To: Erika Wettergreen <ewettergreen@marstel-day.com>
Subject: Final(?) dates for Bison Range Workshop

Hi Erika-

It looks like March 7-9th will work for just about everyone for the Alternatives workshop. That is Wed-Friday that week. Bernardo and I just wanted to double check that those dates definitely work for you before we send out what is hopefully the final email on this!

Thanks!

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From:	Fields, Vanessa
To:	Bernardo Garza
Subject:	Fwd: Final(?) dates for Bison Range Workshop
Date:	Friday, January 26, 2018 9:56:13 AM

YEAH!!!

Division of Science Resources

922 Bootlegger Trail

Great Falls, MT 59404

406-727-7400 x219

406-217-6473 (cell)

--

Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Erika Wettergreen
Subject: Re: Final(?) dates for Bison Range Workshop
Date: Friday, January 26, 2018 9:56:30 AM

Awesome! Thanks for getting back to us so quickly!

On Fri, Jan 26, 2018 at 9:55 AM, Erika Wettergreen <ewettergreen@marstel-day.com> wrote:

> Hi Vanessa,
>
> Those dates work for me.
>
> Thanks!
>
> **From:** Fields, Vanessa [mailto:vanessa_fields@fws.gov]
> **Sent:** Friday, January 26, 2018 11:31 AM
> **To:** Erika Wettergreen <ewettergreen@marstel-day.com>
> **Subject:** Final(?) dates for Bison Range Workshop
>
> Hi Erika-
>
> It looks like March 7-9th will work for just about everyone for the Alternatives workshop. That is Wed-Friday that week. Bernardo and I just wanted to double check that those dates definitely work for you before we send out what is hopefully the final email on this!
>
> Thanks!
>
> --
>
> Vanessa Fields
>
> Invasive Species Ecologist
>
> Division of Science Resources
>
> 922 Bootlegger Trail
>
> Great Falls, MT 59404

> 406-727-7400 x219
>
> 406-217-6473 (cell)

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Fields, Vanessa
Subject: Re: Final(?) dates for Bison Range Workshop
Date: Friday, January 26, 2018 10:00:02 AM

I'll call the hotel now.

Mary Danno cannot make it, but Dee will participate in her place

On Fri, Jan 26, 2018 at 9:56 AM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> YEAH!!!

--

Vanessa Fields

Invasive Species Ecologist

Division of Science Resources

922 Bootlegger Trail

Great Falls, MT 59404

406-727-7400 x219

406-217-6473 (cell)

--
Vanessa Fields
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--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Fields, Vanessa
Subject: Re: Final(?) dates for Bison Range Workshop
Date: Friday, January 26, 2018 10:08:35 AM

The Red Lion hotel meeting room IS available for our workshop on March 7-9. I've reserved it, and I've blocked 5 bedrooms. So I'll prepare an email for everyone in the planning team and send it out.

On Fri, Jan 26, 2018 at 9:56 AM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> YEAH!!!

--

Vanessa Fields

Invasive Species Ecologist

Division of Science Resources

922 Bootlegger Trail

Great Falls, MT 59404

406-727-7400 x219

406-217-6473 (cell)

--
Vanessa Fields
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--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: Final(?) dates for Bison Range Workshop
Date: Friday, January 26, 2018 10:17:58 AM

YEAH!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! AWESOME!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! WHAT A RELIEF!!

just in time for a more relaxed weekend!

On Fri, Jan 26, 2018 at 10:08 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> The Red Lion hotel meeting room IS available for our workshop on March 7-9. I've reserved it, and I've blocked 5 bedrooms. So I'll prepare an email for everyone in the planning team and send it out.
>
> On Fri, Jan 26, 2018 at 9:56 AM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> > YEAH!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Thanks!

--

Vanessa Fields

Invasive Species Ecologist

Division of Science Resources

922 Bootlegger Trail

Great Falls, MT 59404

406-727-7400 x219

406-217-6473 (cell)

--
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Invasive Species Ecologist
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--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
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--

Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist

Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Garza, Bernardo
To: Fields, Vanessa
Subject: Re: Final(?) dates for Bison Range Workshop
Date: Friday, January 26, 2018 10:20:25 AM

What do you think of this?:

Dear Planning Team Members,

It has been an interesting saga finding a date for the National Bison Range Complex CCPs Alternatives Workshop that works for everyone. But, based on conversations and input from all of you, we have rescheduled the said workshop for March 7 – 9 (Wednesday – Friday), 2018.

The site of the workshop is still the Red Lion Ridgewater (209 Ridgewater Drive, Polson, MT 59860). We have reserved a block of five rooms at this hotel (under the name Bernardo Garza) for those of you needing or wishing to stay there.

We thank you for your patience and willingness to work with us in finding the best time for the workshop.

We look forward to seeing and working with you during the workshop and we will forward to you the agenda for the workshop in the next few days.

Vanessa Fields and Bernardo Garza

On Fri, Jan 26, 2018 at 10:17 AM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> YEAH!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! AWESOME!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! WHAT A RELIEF!!
>
> just in time for a more relaxed weekend!
>
> On Fri, Jan 26, 2018 at 10:08 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> > The Red Lion hotel meeting room IS available for our workshop on March 7-9. I've reserved it, and I've blocked 5 bedrooms. So I'll prepare an email for everyone in the planning team and send it out.
> >
> > On Fri, Jan 26, 2018 at 9:56 AM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:
> >
> > > YEAH!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Date: Fri, Jan 26, 2018 at 9:55 AM
Subject: RE: Final(?) dates for Bison Range Workshop
To: "Fields, Vanessa" <vanessa_fields@fws.gov>

Hi Vanessa,

Those dates work for me.

Thanks!

From: Fields, Vanessa [mailto:vanessa_fields@fws.gov]
Sent: Friday, January 26, 2018 11:31 AM
To: Erika Wettergreen <ewettergreen@marstel-day.com>
Subject: Final(?) dates for Bison Range Workshop

Hi Erika-

It looks like March 7-9th will work for just about everyone for the Alternatives workshop. That is Wed-Friday that week. Bernardo and I just wanted to double check that those dates definitely work for you before we send out what is hopefully the final email on this!

Thanks!

--

Vanessa Fields

Invasive Species Ecologist

Division of Science Resources

922 Bootlegger Trail

Great Falls, MT 59404

406-727-7400 x219

406-217-6473 (cell)

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
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406-217-6473 (cell)

--
Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

--
Vanessa Fields
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--
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Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: Final(?) dates for Bison Range Workshop
Date: Friday, January 26, 2018 10:25:37 AM

---

looks perfect! you are planning to send to staff, Erika, visitor services, Will, and cooperators correct? Once it goes out, I will re-do the google calendar invite for our internal folks.

Thank you so much for your work and patience on this!

On Fri, Jan 26, 2018 at 10:20 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> What do you think of this?:
>
> ***Dear Planning Team Members,***
>
> ***It has been an interesting saga finding a date for the National Bison Range Complex CCPs Alternatives Workshop that works for everyone. But, based on conversations and input from all of you, we have rescheduled the said workshop for March 7 – 9 (Wednesday – Friday), 2018.***
>
> ***The site of the workshop is still the Red Lion Ridgewater (209 Ridgewater Drive, Polson, MT 59860). We have reserved a block of five rooms at this hotel (under the name Bernardo Garza) for those of you needing or wishing to stay there.***
>
> ***We thank you for your patience and willingness to work with us in finding the best time for the workshop.***
>
> ***We look forward to seeing and working with you during the workshop and we will forward to you the agenda for the workshop in the next few days.***
>
> ***Vanessa Fields and Bernardo Garza***
>
> On Fri, Jan 26, 2018 at 10:17 AM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:
>
> > YEAH!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! AWESOME!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! WHAT A RELIEF!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

planning team and send it out.

On Fri, Jan 26, 2018 at 9:56 AM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

YEAH!!!

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--
Vanessa Fields
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--
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Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Brian Upton; Dale Becker; David Redhorse; Diane Emmons; Gale Decker; Jennifer Ekberg; Kelly Hogan; Kent Sundseth; Kevin Shinn; Mary Danno; Neil Anderson; Pat Jamieson
Cc:	Will Meeks; Erika Wettergreen
Bcc:	Vanessa Fields; Kelly Hogan; Skinner, Beverly; Amy Lisk
Subject:	Final Schedule for the NBRC CCPs Alternatives Workshop
Date:	Friday, January 26, 2018 10:32:35 AM

Dear Planning Team Members,

It has been an interesting saga finding a date for the National Bison Range Complex CCPs Alternatives Workshop that works for everyone. But, based on conversations and input from all of you, we have rescheduled the said workshop for March 7 – 9 (Wednesday – Friday), 2018.

Please communicate this change of schedule to all the members of your staffs or organizations that will participate in the workshop.

The site of the workshop is still the Red Lion Ridgewater Hotel (209 Ridgewater Drive, Polson, MT 59860). We have reserved a block of five rooms at this hotel (under the name Bernardo Garza) for those of you needing or wishing to stay there.

We thank you for your patience and willingness to work with us in finding the best time for the workshop.

We look forward to seeing and working with you during the workshop and we will forward to you the agenda for the workshop in the next few days.

Vanessa Fields and Bernardo Garza

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Google Calendar on behalf of Vanessa Fields
To: bernardo_garza@fws.gov; beverly_skinner@fws.gov; mike_koole@fws.gov; dean_vaughan@fws.gov; kevin_shinn@fws.gov; brent_woodger@fws.gov; marlin_mcdonald@fws.gov; kent_sundseth@fws.gov; amy_lisk@fws.gov; matthew_mccollister@fws.gov; karen_shoemaker@fws.gov; diane_emmons@fws.gov
Subject: NBRC CCP Alternatives Workshop
Start: Wednesday, March 7, 2018 12:00:00 AM
End: Saturday, March 10, 2018 12:00:00 AM
Location: Red Lion Inn, Polson, MT
Attachments: invite.ics

This event has been changed.

more details » <https://www.google.com/calendar/event?
action=VIEW&eid=MmkwdjNzb2JxaXBsb3E1a292Ym05cmNoZG4gYmVybmFyZG9fZ2FyemFAZndzLmdvdg&tok=MjIjdmFuZXNzYV9maWVsZHNAZndzLmdvdjNjNWI0YTIyM2Y3YTFkNjljYTViNzQ5NGJiNGM5N2E2MGYwOTY0YmQ&ctz=America/Denver&hl=en>

NBRC CCP Alternatives Workshop

Changed:

It has been an interesting saga finding a date for the National Bison Range Complex CCPs Alternatives Workshop that works for everyone. But, based on conversations and input from all of you, we have rescheduled the said workshop for March 7 – 9 (Wednesday – Friday), 2018.

The site of the workshop is still the Red Lion Ridgewater Hotel (209 Ridgewater Drive, Polson, MT 59860). We have reserved a block of five rooms at this hotel (under the name Bernardo Garza) for those of you needing or wishing to stay there.

We thank you for your patience and willingness to work with us in finding the best time for the workshop.

When
Changed: Wed Mar 7 – Fri Mar 9, 2018
Where
Red Lion Inn, Polson, MT (map <https://maps.google.com/maps?q=Red+Lion+Inn,+Polson,+MT&hl=en>)
Video call
https://plus.google.com/hangouts/_/doi.gov/vanessa-fields <https://plus.google.com/hangouts/_/doi.gov/vanessa-fields?hceid=dmFuZXNzYV9maWVsZHNAZndzLmdvdg.2i0v3sobqiploq5kovbm9rchdn>
Calendar
bernardo_garza@fws.gov
Who
• vanessa_fields@fws.gov
- organizer
• beverly_skinner@fws.gov
• bernardo_garza@fws.gov
• mike_koole@fws.gov
• dean_vaughan@fws.gov
• kevin_shinn@fws.gov
• brent_woodger@fws.gov
• marlin_mcdonald@fws.gov
• kent_sundseth@fws.gov
• amy_lisk@fws.gov
• matthew_mccollister@fws.gov
• karen_shoemaker@fws.gov
• diane_emmons@fws.gov

Going?
Yes <https://www.google.com/calendar/event?
action=RESPOND&eid=MmkwdjNzb2JxaXBsb3E1a292Ym05cmNoZG4gYmVybmFyZG9fZ2FyemFAZndzLmdvdg&rst=1&tok=MjIjdmFuZXNzYV9maWVsZHNAZndzLmdvdjNjNWI0YTIyM2Y3YTFkNjljYTViNzQ5NGJiNGM5N2E2MGYwOTY0YmQ&ctz=America/Denver&hl=en>
-
Maybe <https://www.google.com/calendar/event?
action=RESPOND&eid=MmkwdjNzb2JxaXBsb3E1a292Ym05cmNoZG4gYmVybmFyZG9fZ2FyemFAZndzLmdvdg&rst=3&tok=MjIjdmFuZXNzYV9maWVsZHNAZndzLmdvdjNjNWI0YTIyM2Y3YTFkNjljYTViNzQ5NGJiNGM5N2E2MGYwOTY0YmQ&ctz=America/Denver&hl=en>
-
No <https://www.google.com/calendar/event?
action=RESPOND&eid=MmkwdjNzb2JxaXBsb3E1a292Ym05cmNoZG4gYmVybmFyZG9fZ2FyemFAZndzLmdvdg&rst=2&tok=MjIjdmFuZXNzYV9maWVsZHNAZndzLmdvdjNjNWI0YTIyM2Y3YTFkNjljYTViNzQ5NGJiNGM5N2E2MGYwOTY0YmQ&ctz=America/Denver&hl=en>
more options » <https://www.google.com/calendar/event?
action=VIEW&eid=MmkwdjNzb2JxaXBsb3E1a292Ym05cmNoZG4gYmVybmFyZG9fZ2FyemFAZndzLmdvdg&tok=MjIjdmFuZXNzYV9maWVsZHNAZndzLmdvdjNjNWI0YTIyM2Y3YTFkNjljYTViNzQ5NGJiNGM5N2E2MGYwOTY0YmQ&ctz=America/Denver&hl=en>

Invitation from Google Calendar <https://www.google.com/calendar/>

You are receiving this email at the account bernardo_garza@fws.gov because you are subscribed for updated invitations on calendar bernardo_garza@fws.gov.

To stop receiving these emails, please log in to https://www.google.com/calendar/ and change your notification settings for this calendar.

Forwarding this invitation could allow any recipient to modify your RSVP response. Learn More <https://support.google.com/calendar/answer/37135#forwarding> .

From:	Erika Wettergreen
To:	Fields, Vanessa; Bernardo Garza
Cc:	Sean Donahoe
Subject:	NBRC NEPA support - DRAFT AR Schema - for your review
Date:	Monday, January 29, 2018 7:35:53 AM
Attachments:	DRAFT NBRC CCP NEPA Administrative Record Schema 1_29_18.docx

Good morning!

I have attached the draft AR schema that will are using to build the Excel Spreadsheet. Please let me know if you have any additions/ changes so we can integrate those in the architecture of the AR spreadsheet.

I will be providing you both with login information later this week to see if you can gain access to our SharePoint site. Fingers crossed!

If you would like, we can discuss this draft during our Thursday afternoon call.

Cheers,

Erika

Administrative Record Schema

The Administrative Record (AR) is the compilation of files/materials documenting the decision-making process of the agency. The following describes the organization of and process for developing and maintaining the Administrative Record.

AR Approach

In general, the Administrative Record should include:

- All documents and materials that were before or available to persons involved in the decision at the time the decision was made.
- All documents that were considered or relied upon by persons involved in the decision.
- Documents that relate to both the substance and procedure of making the decision.
- All pertinent documents regardless of whether they favor the decision that was finally made, favor alternatives other than the final decision, or express criticism of the final decision. Documents should never be withheld just because they reflect negatively on the decision that was finally made.
- Documents that may end up later being redacted or removed from the record on the basis of privilege.

Kinds of information to be included:

- All documents and materials prepared, reviewed or received by agency personnel and used by or available to the decision-maker.
- Policies, guidelines, directives and manuals.
- Articles and books (be sensitive to copyright laws governing duplication).
- Factual information or data.
- Communications the agency received from other agencies and the public, and any responses to those communications (electronic communications in hardcopy form; telephone/conference calls as memos to file).
- Documents and materials that contain information that support or oppose the agency decision.
- Drafts circulated for comment outside the author and the agency, if changes in the drafts reflect significant input into the decision-making process.
- Technical information, sampling results, survey information, reports or studies.
- Decision documents.
- Minutes of meetings or transcripts thereof.
- Documentation of telephone conversations and meetings, including memos and handwritten notes.

Kinds of information not to be included:

- Documents associated with, but not part of, the decision-making process, such as fax cover sheets.
- Various versions of a document where the differences among the drafts reflect minor editing changes. Include drafts, however, where hand-written notes or changes from one version to the next reflect the evolving process.
- Work in progress documents (to include interim products and team drafts that have not been reviewed by the Service)

- E-mails and other correspondence that discuss the agency action generally but do not reflect decision-making considerations by staff (for example, communications between biologists whose work may be affected by the outcome of the decision-making process but who are not involved in the decision itself).

AR Design

- An excel document with sort/ filter options will be established to log in documents
- Each document will be assigned a specific file name and unique record log identification number when inserted into the Excel spreadsheet. The code will include the name of the project as well as a sequential number based on when it was received.
- An index will be used to tag each document with identification information:
    - Sequential Project code (NBRC-#)
    - Title/Description
    - Author (Last name, first name)
    - Recipient (Last name, first name)
    - Date (month, date. Year…eg 11/7/2018)
    - NEPA Document(s) (EIS, EA)
    - Organizational Area(s)
        - Primary NEPA document
        - NEPA document reference materials
        - Project Background
        - Public Involvement
        - Agency Coordination/ Consultation
        - Tribal Coordination/ Consultation
        - CCP Planning Team Materials
        - Internal Communications
        - Policy and Guidance
        - Other
    - Document Type
        - NEPA decision Documents (e.g. versions of the EA/EIS, FONSI, ROD)
        - Meeting minutes/ summary
        - Memorandum
        - Briefing
        - Data
        - Email
        - Handout
        - Letter
        - Map
        - Newspaper article
        - Technical report
        - Policy/Guidance
        - Other

- Subject Matter Area(s)
    - Socio-economic
    - Air Quality
    - Biological
    - Water
    - Geology
    - Hazardous waste
    - Land use
    - Cultural resources
    - Transportation
    - Environmental Justice
    - General
- A privileged Information tab will be created within the Excel spreadsheet (e.g. redacted material, certain tribal data, mapping, archeological sites, T&E locations)

AR Management Process

The Marstel-Day AR Coordinator will manage the Excel spreadsheet and oversee the archiving of the documents. The Coordinator will work closely with the Marstel-Day project team, as well as coordinate with the USFWS POCs. The AR is viewed as a living document and will be continuously updated throughout the life of the project.

- The AR Coordinator will build a client portal on the MD SharePoint Project Site and will provide login and password access to the USFWS POCs.
- USFWS will upload documents/ material to the client portal on the MD SharePoint Site throughout the life of the project. The MD NEPA team will also upload documents/ material to the MD SharePoint Site throughout the life of the project.
- If security measures and/or procedures prevent direct access to server locations, then the Service will maintain files on their own intranet/cloud server and provide a location for Marstel-Day to periodically download these files. It is likely that many files may be transferred between Marstel-Day and the Service, and that only certain files should be specifically placed in the AR. As such, the Service will need to either create a designated folder for files to be placed in the AR, or identified those specifically in their file name (e.g., add "AR-" to the file name), so that we clearly understand that these documents should be placed in the AR. Once these files are ready for transfer, the Service will send an email to Erika Wettergreen (ewettergreen@marstel-day.com) to let us know that the files are ready to be transferred to Marstel-Day with a link and password to your designated intranet/cloud server site. Erika will then coordinate internally with the AR Coordinator to ensure that the files are added to the AR.
- The AR Coordinator will add all document/ material information to the Excel Spreadsheet.
- The AR Coordinator will place the actual document/ material in an archive folder which can be linked to the Excel spreadsheet entry.
- During the NBR CCP NEPA support Project Update meetings, the progress and status of the AR will be discussed. We will take this opportunity to briefly discuss the documents that have been added to the spreadsheet since the last meeting.

From:	Erika Wettergreen
To:	Fields, Vanessa; Bernardo Garza
Subject:	RE: Feedback from Bison Range staff on agenda
Date:	Monday, January 29, 2018 8:55:55 AM
Attachments:	NBRC_Alternatives Workshop Agenda DRAFT 1_29_18.docx

Good morning Vanessa and Bernardo,

I have attached the updated Participant Agenda based on our phone conversation last week.

I will make updates/ corrections to the Process Outline once you all approve of the attached agenda.

Happily,

Erika

From: Fields, Vanessa [mailto:vanessa_fields@fws.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2018 6:00 PM
To: Erika Wettergreen <ewettergreen@marstel-day.com>; Bernardo Garza <bernardo_garza@fws.gov>
Subject: Feedback from Bison Range staff on agenda

Hi Erika-

Bernardo and I had a call with the Bison Range Complex staff today to go over the agenda, brainstorm goal topics and alternative themes and generally prepare/answer questions. I have attached the notes here in case we want to talk about anything on our call Thursday.

Thanks!

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
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406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

National Bison Range Complex

Comprehensive Conservation Plan
Alternatives Workshop Agenda

Purpose: To bring the NBRC CCP Planning Team together to collaboratively develop a viable set of alternative plans for the NBRC CCPs.

Intended Outcome: Range of Management Alternatives with written descriptions and a completed Alternatives Matrix.

Location: Red Lion Inn, 209 Ridgewater Drive, Polson, MT 59860

Dates: March 7-9, 2018

DAY 1

8:30 Welcome and Workshop Introduction

- Welcome the planning team.
- Give overview of the workshop (intent and outcome).
- Describe roles and responsibilities of workshop leaders, facilitation team, planning team.
- Introduce facilitation team, who will go over workshop logistics.

8:45 Team Connection

- Exercise designed to invigorate the attendees and prepare them for an interactive workshop.

9:00 Planning Process Reflection (Overview)

- Recap of CCP planning process, including review of alternative development steps.
- Provide synopsis of the previous CCP attempt, including what was discovered last time and which ideas seemed to still have traction.
- Present the outcomes of the CCP planning steps completed to date and describe what happens next.
- Re-introduce CCP Vision and Goals agreed upon at last workshop, recognizing that they will be the foundation for developing the alternatives.

9:30 Birds Eye View of NBR Complex

- Projected USFWS approach to managing NBRC within a more comprehensive Refuge context
- Describe the importance of managing the NBRC units as one single complex, highlighting the major issues/ areas of focus for each unit. (The purpose of this section is not to repeat what has already been presented in previous meetings. This is for highlighting what are the most important issues that the CCP needs to address for each of these units.)
- HGM; Lost Trail CCP; Cecil Frost Fire study

10:30 BREAK

11:00 CCP Goal Topic Area Generation

- Discuss list of suggested goal topic areas provided as read-ahead
- Determine if there are other topic areas that should be incorporated to achieve each CCP goal.
- Team consensus on final set of topic areas to include in the alternatives development process.

12:00 LUNCH

1:15 Current Complex Management Approach

- Discuss Visitor Services Review
- Assess current management approach as it relates to the CCP goals and specific topic areas in order to populate the No Action portion of the Alternatives Matrix
- Determine where there may be need for adjustment to the topic areas based on team discussion

3:00 BREAK

3:30 Management Alternative Concepts - Idea-sharing

- Provide a platform for participants to introduce alternative concepts.
- This information will work toward getting the team to think about concepts/ themes for alternatives.

4:30 Day 1 Review

- Highlight items covered and outcomes
- Team observations
- Look ahead to Day 2 activities

5:00 End of Day 1

Team Dinner (optional)

DAY 2

8:00 Morning Check in

- Exercise designed to energize the team and prepare them for a day of interaction

8:15 Day 2 Alignment

- Brief recap of Day 1 accomplishments
- Introduction of Day 2 focus

8:30 Management Alternatives Concept Development

- Small group discussion of possible concepts (refer to examples and presentations from Day 1)
- Small group introduction of strongest concepts with brief descriptions

9:30 Morning Stretch

- Wall Walk – Participant select the alternative concepts that they would like to see move forward.
- This activity is part of the **Morning Break**.

10:00 Management Alternatives Concept Review

- Team discusses the top tier of management alternatives concepts
- Fine-tune the descriptions of top tier management alternative concepts
- Obtain team consensus on management alternative concepts moving forward

11:00 Overview of Alternatives Development

- Re-introduce Alternatives Matrix, CCP goals, and specific topic areas
- Review the No Action Plan portion of the Alternatives Matrix (from Day 1 activity)
- Develop key components of CCP goal topic areas for inclusion into alternative concepts

12:00 LUNCH

1:30 Alternatives Development

- Small group activity to fill in the Alternatives Matrix for the alternatives
- Key components of CCP goal topic areas worksheets will be incorporated into the matrix input
- A checklist of items to consider when populating the matrix will be provided to encourage the development of well-rounded, distinguishable, goal-oriented alternatives.
- An **Afternoon Break** will be integrated into this activity

4:30 Day 2 Review

- Highlight workshop items covered and outcomes
- Team observations
- Look ahead to Day 3 activities

5:00 End of Day 2

Team Dinner (optional)

DAY 3

8:00 Morning Check in

- Exercise designed to energize the team and prepare them for a day of interaction

8:15 Day 3 Alignment

- Brief recap of Day 2 accomplishments
- Introduction of Day 3 focus

8:30 Alternatives Presentations

- Each Alternative will be introduced by a participant identified as the advocate for that alternative. They will walk the planning team through the Alternatives Matrix information.
- Planning Team will provide additional comments and suggestions for updating the matrix information.
- A checklist will be provided to encourage the development of well-rounded, distinguishable, goal-oriented alternatives.
- A **Morning Break** will be integrated into this exercise.

11:00 Alternatives Refinement

- Provide additional input to the alternatives presented for team consideration.

11:30 Team Lunch (optional)

1:00 Team Review of Alternatives Refinement

- Planning team will review and consider additional input and update the alternatives accordingly.

2:30 Workshop Reflection

- Review of items covered during the workshop
- Shared observations team activity
- Individual feedback on the workshop process, logistics, and outcome (short questionnaire)

3:30 Next Steps, Team Recognition, and Workshop Closing

4:00 Conclusion of Alternatives Workshop

From:	Garza, Bernardo
To:	Vanessa Fields
Subject:	Per our conversation on today"s meeting
Date:	Monday, January 29, 2018 10:19:17 AM

Hi again,

I checked with Betsy and Will had already scheduled the Alternatives Workshop in his calendar. So it is set. He will travel on Monday because he is meeting with the tribal council on Tuesday (the day before we start the workshop).

I also spoke with Natalie Sexton (social scientist in FWS office in Ft Collins) and she is very interested in the NBR, so she is checking with her staff and will send me dates and times (yet this week) when we can have a conference call with her and her staff.

--

Bernardo Garza
Planning Team Leader
Branch of Planning and Policy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
Office (303) 236-4377
Fax (303) 236-4792

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Garza, Bernardo
Subject: Re: Per our conversation on today"s meeting
Date: Monday, January 29, 2018 10:54:18 AM

That all sounds fabulous!

Thank you!

On Mon, Jan 29, 2018 at 10:19 AM, Garza, Bernardo <bernardo_garza@fws.gov> wrote:

> Hi again,
>
> I checked with Betsy and Will had already scheduled the Alternatives Workshop in his calendar. So it is set. He will travel on Monday because he is meeting with the tribal council on Tuesday (the day before we start the workshop).
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> I also spoke with Natalie Sexton (social scientist in FWS office in Ft Collins) and she is very interested in the NBR, so she is checking with her staff and will send me dates and times (yet this week) when we can have a conference call with her and her staff.
>
> --
> **Bernardo Garza**
> **Planning Team Leader**
> **Branch of Planning and Policy**
> **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region**
> **Office (303) 236-4377**
> **Fax (303) 236-4792**

--
Vanessa Fields
Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Ryan Moehring
To: Vanessa Fields; Bernardo Garza
Subject: RE: NBRC Public Engagement follow up - response needed
Date: Wednesday, January 31, 2018 5:53:33 PM

Hi Vanessa,

Apologies for the delay. Is this still an unmet need? Are you trying to prepare a briefing paper?

If this is still pending, Betsy Matten can provide you with the most up to date template (they change frequently). The programs typically handle the creation of briefing papers, but I'm happy to give it a read.

Apologies again. My bandwidth is rather limited these days. ☺

Thanks,
Ryan

Ryan Moehring
Public Affairs
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mountain-Prairie Region
303-236-0345

From: Fields, Vanessa [mailto:vanessa_fields@fws.gov]
Sent: Friday, January 26, 2018 9:49 AM
To: Ryan Moehring; Bernardo Garza
Subject: NBRC Public Engagement follow up - response needed

Ryan/Bernardo-

Bernardo and I have been consumed this week with getting the Alternatives workshop rescheduled, but we need to follow up on the public engagement discussion with Will and Mo last week.

The most pressing thing I have in my notes is that Will wanted an up-to-date briefing statement completed by next **Wednesday, January 31st.**

I have not done these before, so I don't have an up-to-date copy of the template and I do not know how the three of us want to approach these. Ryan are you usually involved in preparing these or is this something for Bernardo and I? I am happy to take the first stab at one if someone can point me to the proper format/template.

If we need to have a short discussion about this, let me know and I can schedule a time.

Thanks!

--
Vanessa Fields

Invasive Species Ecologist
Division of Science Resources
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-727-7400 x219
406-217-6473 (cell)

From: Fields, Vanessa
To: Ryan Moehring
Cc: Bernardo Garza
Subject: Re: NBRC Public Engagement follow up - response needed
Date: Thursday, February 1, 2018 7:52:34 AM

No worries Ryan - we ended up doing this on Monday when the news of the settlement hit. I appreciate the info on how you usually handle these things for the future though. We are going to keep the briefing updates on the google drive (here) so that folks can grab the latest one any time they need to. Bernardo and I will make sure it is always updated.

I did send you a separate email though on follow up from the public engagement strategy and preparing for alternatives roll-out - given your busy schedule, let us know how you want to handle things - email, conference call, whatever works best for you, Bernardo and I are pretty flexible.

On Wed, Jan 31, 2018 at 5:53 PM, Ryan Moehring <ryan_moehring@fws.gov> wrote:

> Hi Vanessa,
>
> Apologies for the delay. Is this still an unmet need? Are you trying to prepare a briefing paper?
>
> If this is still pending, Betsy Matten can provide you with the most up to date template (they change frequently). The programs typically handle the creation of briefing papers, but I'm happy to give it a read.
>
> Apologies again. My bandwidth is rather limited these days. ☺
>
> Thanks,
>
> Ryan
>
> Ryan Moehring
>
> Public Affairs
>
> U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
>
> Mountain-Prairie Region
>
> 303-236-0345
>
> **From:** Fields, Vanessa [mailto:vanessa_fields@fws.gov]

Sent: Friday, January 26, 2018 9:49 AM
To: Ryan Moehring; Bernardo Garza
Subject: NBRC Public Engagement follow up - response needed

Ryan/Bernardo-

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From: Woodger, Brent
To: Fields, Vanessa
Subject: Re: Notes: NBRC CCP Staff Coordination Call 12/11
Date: Friday, March 30, 2018 9:21:25 AM

MY VOTE IS NINEPIPE IN THE CENTER OF VALLEY THATS WHERE MAJORITY OF PEOPLE; LANDOWNERS WE WORK WITH LIVE

On Mon, Dec 11, 2017 at 12:21 PM, Fields, Vanessa <vanessa_fields@fws.gov> wrote:

> Hello Bison Range Complex CCP Team!
>
> Bernardo and I joined Kelly and the available NBRC staff this morning for a call to kick-off a regular monthly CCP coordination call. We apologize if this was short notice and we missed some of you this time, but we will hopefully catch everyone moving forward.
>
> We had a brief discussion on how and when to hold this call - the consensus was to have a CCP coordination call during the first NBRC staff meeting of the month. The planning staff will call in, we will limit the CCP discussion to no more than the first 30 minutes, and then schedule any follow up calls we may need for the month if more discussion on a topic is needed. If you have any questions or concerns about this plan, please let Kelly know and he can pass it along to Bernardo and I and we will find another solution.
>
> We wanted to provide a summary of today's discussion and the list of action items:
>
> 1. Alternatives Development
> The alternatives workshop is scheduled for the **week of February 6th**. It will likely be at the Red Lion in Polson again. Bernardo and I are meeting with the contractors who are assisting us with this workshop on Thursday (12/14). After that call we will have a better idea of the agenda and more information. Also, Will Meeks has expressed his intention to be there for all of the workshop.
>
> We need to gather and organize information before this workshop so that we are well prepared going into it. We discussed a number of action items to start to move this way:
>
> -Vanessa will set up a location on the google drive where we can begin to coordinate and share relevant documents for the Alternatives Development by Monday COB
> -Vanessa and Bernardo will provide staff with some preliminary guidance on what materials we need for Alternatives development by COB Wednesday
> -Bernardo will post on the google drive the NBRC documents that Bernie has already shared for Alternatives Development by COB Wednesday
> -Amy and Bev are meeting on Thursday to begin to begin organizing and identifying gaps in biological information for the Alternatives workshop
> -Vanessa will do a search on ServCat to see what documents are available. I will also search the Benton Lake server for relevant documents from the Benton Lake Complex CCP process that included Lost Trail and the Flathead County WPAs by COB Wednesday.
>
> 2. Communications Plan
> Vanessa and Bernardo are going to work with Ryan Moerhing from External Affairs on further developing the Communications Plan that was started with the Notice of Intent. Our intention is to look at the overall CCP process and develop a proactive communication

strategy. As we get something developed, we will get staff input and ultimately, of course, Will and Mo will need to approve it (estimated completion: January).

3. Vision and Goals
We have received some follow-up comments from our cooperating agencies on the summary scoping report, but no requests for changes to the Vision and Goals. We will circle back to fine-tuning/editing/wordsmithing the Vision and Goals as we prepare the draft CCP.

4. Other happenings
The Service received a FOIA from PEER on October 20th (see attached). The response has been handled and provided through the RO. The CSKT requested consultation with the Service on changes to staffing at the NBRC, the R6 realignment plan and the CCP. Kelly is working with Will and Mo on this.

We will have the next monthly coordination call during the NBRC staff meeting at 9am on January 8th. I will send out a google calendar invite for this.

If you have questions/comments/corrections on any of this, please let us know! Also, if I forgot anyone on this email list, please let me know so I can correct that ASAP!

--
Vanessa Fields
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Region 6 NWRS Management Team Meeting
May 15, 2017

Assistant Regional Director: Will Meeks

- No RDT meeting today
- RO renovation of 6th floor could take a month.
- This week working on National transformation team at RMA. 75 day turnaround for final product. Working on communications plan for continuing conversations across programs and the field. Expectation for this team is to be open and transparent across regions towards transforming FWS.
- FY18 President's Budget is due out next Tuesday

Deputy Assistant Regional Director: Maureen Gallagher

- No report – on Annual Leave

Mountain Zone (CO, MT, UT, WY): Bernie Petersen

- No report

Prairie Zone (KS, NE, ND, SD): Barbara Boyle

- Easement Specialist PD's sent to Jim Hyde for review/development
- HB1399 - still waiting from guidance from HQ.
- In Monday and Tuesday, out through May 23 - Detroit Lakes Festival of Birds - returning Wednesday, May 24.
- Dominic Barrett will be acting Deputy Refuge Supervisor from May 22- June 16. Please welcome Dominic and being including him on emails

Partners for Fish and Wildlife: Heather Johnson

- Trifold brochures of 5 year plan are being circulated. A distribution will be made to all field stations this week.
- Last week was in Kentucky for National Cattlemen's Beef Association Environmental Stewardship Award Program, selection committee meeting. It was an excellent meeting and there were some outstanding Regional winners this year.
- Colorado Partners Program won the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Partner of the Year Award. Bill Noonan and Bob Timberman were able to attend the banquet last week, where the program was recognized. Congratulations to the Colorado PFW Team!
- 30th Anniversary events taking place this week in Washington, D.C. There will be a Hill Reception Tuesday evening, followed by an Open House on Thursday, a Strategic Plan briefing with Jim Kurth, and Hill Visits throughout the week.

Biological Resources: Keenan Adams

- In office next two weeks
- Bear River HMP/CCP went well last week
- Invasive strike teams up and running this week

    - An MOU was signed between FWS-Tewaukon NWR and Sisseton-Wahpeton-Oyate regarding the construction and removal of the refuge office. Karri Springer will be on site during all ground disturbance phases of the project.
- **Planning and Policy:** Kelly Hogan
    - Nothing to report.
- **Visitor Services and Outreach:** Dee Emmons
    - Friends Group mentoring visits are being scheduled for the Sandhills Prairie Refuges Association (Fort Niobrara NWR, Valentine NWR, and John W. and Louise Seier NWR) and the Friends of Sullys Hill (Sullys Hill NGP).
    - The quarterly Region 6 Visitor Services and Outreach conference call is scheduled for Tuesday, May 16 at 10:00am Mountain Time.

External Affairs: Ryan Moehring

- Rocky Flats sharing session tonight
- Last week "Every Kids in the Park" event at RMA for celebrating Cinco de Mayo
- National Bison Range CCP outreach package at the Department for review.

Region 6 NWRS Management Team Meeting
May 22, 2017

Assistant Regional Director: Will Meeks

- Acting Deputy RD for the rest of the week.
- President's Budget will be released tomorrow. The RDT will get together tomorrow morning and an all employee call will be scheduled for Tuesday afternoon.
- Last week (Wed/Thurs) met with "Transformation Team" to develop a plan per OMB's guidance. The team is comprised of Headquarters, Regional Office, and Field staff. We are directed to consider two recent documents. These include: Comprehensive Plan for Reforming the Federal Government and Reducing the Federal Civilian Workforce https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/whitehouse.gov/files/omb/memoranda/2017/M-17-22.pdf and, the Executive Order on a Comprehensive Plan for Reorganizing the Executive Branch https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/03/13/presidential-executive-order-comprehensive-plan-reorganizing-executive . A product is due mid-July to have recommendations to the Director. The Team will have weekly conference calls and have already scheduled two face-to-face meetings. The intent is to be as transparent and communicative as possible.
- **What**: The President's' Budget will be released and OMB is directing agencies to make recommendations on reorganizing the Executive Branch. **So What:** How can we reorganize (reduce duplication and redundancy) to have more conservation on the ground and increase our efficiency (i.e., save money and time)? **Now What**: We have to sort through the efforts from past streamlining/reorganization efforts as well as consider new organizational efficiencies and make a recommendation for Directorate consideration. All staff are encouraged to provide input directly to team members.
- New DTS function called "Early Alerts" that is supposed to inform the Department of highly impactful/controversial actions.
- We currently have low a FEVS response rate. All people are encouraged to respond.

Deputy Assistant Regional Director: Maureen Gallagher

- NTR

Mountain Zone (CO, MT, UT, WY): Amy Thornburg

- Bernie is out all week on AL
- Got an email from CGS. Looks like we can do new mods under 100k without department review.
- The Notice of Intent for the National Bison Range CCP/EIS, and the NOI for CCP the remaining refuges in the Complex was published on May 18 in the Federal register. The first public meetings are being planned for early June with a Cooperating Agency meeting in July.
- The final sharing session for Rocky Flats NWR, covering public safety communication, was held May 15, 2017 in Arvada, CO. Approximately 100 people showed up to listen to presentations by the DOE, CDPHE and EPA as well as Project Leader Lucas. Overall the comments received were positive with only one outburst from the group of those opposing the opening of the refuge. All major news stations in the metro area covered the meeting.
- There was a lawsuit filed over the plans for opening the Rocky Flats NWR. This could put a hold on the planning process as we work through the suit.

- I have a conference call tomorrow with "Milkweed Tool Technical Team". The team will discuss priorities to target of 1.6 billion additional milkweed stems identified as essential component of the monarch conservation effort.
- PPJV Technical Committee conference call Tuesday afternoon. Focus is on science priorities as identified in the 2017 Implementation Plan update? Waiting on additional information.
- DFP reports next week. Alan Yanahan is at NCTC this week for training. We reached out to him and provided information about the Bismarck area. Looking forward to getting him onboard. Neal Niemuth will settle him in when he arrives next week.
- Schedule - I will be on vacation the week of May 29 - June 2. Mike Estey will be filling in.

Refuge Law Enforcement: David Bonham

- In all week
- In lieu of national policy, regions should be expecting some internal guidance from DRLE on type and style of external carries for field use. This guidance can be used to help regions to determine the best use practices for external carriers for body armor.
- A draft FTO assignment list has been completed for the new FWO's that are attending FLETC. Once the list is finalized in a week or two, Officers will be notified of their FTO's and they can start making contact to set up their upcoming field training. The field training will start after the Federal Wildlife Officer Basic Training course (FWOBT, formally known as ROBS) completion on September 23, 2017.

Policy and Budget Development: Gina Martinez

- Working on getting allocations completed, hoping for allocations to come from HQ this week

Realty: Greg Langer

- Surveyors in Portland this week.

People, Planning, and Policy: Reported out by Dee Emmons

- **Cultural Resources:** Meg Van Ness - Last week's meeting with 18 cultural resources staff from across the nation went very well. Excellent discussions on a variety of topics and issues. The trip to the San Luis Valley NWRs was great - the Refuge staff were great hosts. They found an additional 10 projectile points on the Scott Miller site!
- **Planning and Policy:** Kelly Hogan
    - Two NOIs were published in the Federal Register on May 18th, opening a 30-day scoping period. One NOI is about preparing a CCP/EIS for the National Bison Range. One NOI is to prepare a CCP/EA for Pablo NWR, Ninepipe NWR, and the NW Montana WMD. The comment period closes on June 19th.
    - Related public meetings are scheduled for June 6, 2017 (Polson, MT) and June 7, 2017 (Kalispell, MT).

- **Visitor Services and Outreach:** Dee Emmons
    - Contractor Kimley-Horn will be at Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR, along with a number of other Service staff, this Monday - Wednesday as part of a national FWS Urban Transportation Study.
    - Delissa Padilla was at Bear River MBR last week to meet with Refuge staff about their urban program plans.
    - The week of June 5, VSO Branch staff will be reviewing proposals from potential contractors for a 5-year interpretive panel and exhibit IDIQ.

Region 6 NWRS Management Team Meeting
June 5, 2017

Deputy Assistant Regional Director: Maureen Gallagher

- Matt Bizal and Patrick McKinney were introduced to the RMT. Matt is joining us through the Department of Veterans Affairs Non-Paid Work Experience Program. He will be working with the Regional Office Business Team and Realty surveyors for a minimum of 3 months. Patrick McKinney, Grants Administrator, is participating in the NCTC Leadership program and will be the acting Deputy PFW Coordinator for two weeks.
- Maureen is (Acting) ARD through the end of July. Will needs to focus on the Transformation Team. He plans to check in when possible for major issues. He reiterates if you have ideas about Transformation drop him a note and he will contact you.
- Remember to sign up for Civil Treatment for Leaders training. There are four dates and locations; June 7, Jamestown, ND; June 22, Lakewood CO; August 9, Great Falls, MT; September 20, Lakewood, CO. Insure you and any of your staff who supervise are signed up for one of these trainings. It is mandatory for all supervisors and fulfills the EEO and Diversity training requirements for this year. Sign-up through DOI Learn.
- RDT Meeting - Noreen traveling to Bismarck, ND on June 19-20 for an all employee listening session. More trip information will be forthcoming from Stephanie Potter. Noreen will also attend the Grohne WPA dedication with the refuge project leader. Refuges needs to provide Stephanie the necessary information ASAP.
- A reminder: locks will be changed on the RO doors from the current Key cards to use of PIV cards in June. Staff will receive email instructions from Kathy Dennis to activate their cards in the new locking system. The switch to the new system will occur when all cards have been activated. Until then it is a good time to emphasize need to carry PIV cards with you whenever leaving your station. If you need a card holder see Betsy Matten. It was noted that Steve Smith can update current PIV cards. New PIV cards will continue to be obtained through current outlets.
- Ban on contracted help has been lifted. No longer need to send through DOI. However, current contract rules still apply. Do not confuse this with grants and agreements.
- ES is planning to schedule a "Foundations" training course in Denver. If you have folks that need it let Betsy Matten know.
- Noreen is receiving documents with facsimile of her signature on the document. If you see one try to locate the source and remove the signature. It is never acceptable to use a facsimile of Noreen's signature.
- Brady McGee will be acting "Chief of Staff". He is the first of several ALDPs that will be in the region for a 60 day tour. Brady is stationed at the ES office in Albuquerque, NM.
- No RDT meeting next week

Mountain Zone (CO, MT, UT, WY): Bernie Petersen

- Bison Range CCP is in process. Public meetings are scheduled in Polson and Kalispell.
- CMR prairie dog vaccination program is open for a 30-day comment period. Will use ATVs to disperse the vaccine. There is a video that shows the vaccine production and dispersal process.

Policy and Budget Development: Gina Martinez—Jolene Beaudry reporting

- MO for Gina - FY17 have not been released yet. Ready to move once word is received.

Realty: Greg Langer

- No report

People, Planning, and Policy: Reported by Dee Emmons

- **Cultural Resources:** Meg Van Ness
  - Nothing to report
- **Planning and Policy:** Kelly Hogan
  - National Bison Range CCP planning efforts continue.
- **Visitor Services and Outreach:** Dee Emmons
  - Due to an incident in another region involving embezzlement of America the Beautiful Pass and Duck Stamp revenues, a national team has been put together to review the Service's Rec Fee Program practices and processes. Jeff Craig, a retired Service employee, has been contracted to assist the team. The team will do a "pilot" review of the Rec Fee program at Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR (due to its proximity to Denver). Upon completion of any other site visits and a review of process and procedure information gathered from other fee collection sites, the team will develop best practice guidance for field stations that participate in the Rec Fee program.
  - Jackie Jacobson, Mary Danno, and Dee will be reviewing proposals from potential contractors this week for the next 5-year interpretive panel and exhibit IDIQ.

External Affairs: Ryan Moehring

- The news release for the EA proposing to expand the use of sylvatic plague vaccine on CMR and UL Bend NWRs is out. Good coverage thus far.
- Working with environmental journalist, Todd Williamson, on article focusing on arctic grayling stream restoration on Red Rock Lakes NWR. Todd will be at the refuge this Friday. Trying to get Jim McGee, perhaps someone at MT FWP to assist Bill West with the interview.
- Reminder we are on a litigation hold for Rocky Flats. All media inquiries should be directed to Ryan Moehring, who will coordinate with DOJ.
- Kudos to Kate Miyamoto for her outstanding article in Fish and Wildlife News focusing on Monarch Mania at Quivira NWR.
- In M-W, in training Th, Fri.

Region 6 NWRS Management Team Meeting
June 12, 2017

Assistant Regional Director: Maureen Gallagher, acting

- No RDT meeting. Noreen was in Cheyenne for a Cheyenne ES all hands meeting. She also presented WY PFW Biologist Mindy Meade the ES Recovery Champion Award for her work with the Wyoming Toad.
- Human Resources staff and assignments fact sheet was handed out. Should also have been sent to the field.
- Maureen is crafting an email to project leaders reminding them of the required level of review for grants/agreements and decisions – need to be reviewed by the department before finalized. The department has a template for use. POC is Kelly Hogan with discussion with your supervisor.
- Cell phone and tablet bills are high and growing. In the regional office alone, cell phone and tablet bill for refuges regional office employees is $2000/month. In an effort to reduce costs and improve efficiencies, the regional office will be forming a team comprised of Greg, Gina, and Maureen to develop some guidance on cell phone/tablet distribution and use.
- RAPP will be ready to go June 12, though we may be waiting on the Director's memo. Encourage Refuge Managers and Project Leaders to prepare for RAPP. Amy Thornburg is the POC for RAPP.
- Call for ALDP applications must be postmarked no later than midnight June 23.
- Call for SUTL applications are due July 14.

Mountain Zone (CO, MT, UT, WY): Bernie Petersen

- Last week there were CCP kickoff meetings - Tuesday night in Polson, MT and Wednesday night in Kalispel, MT. Gathering input from audience on key issues and opportunities. Meetings went well. Good coverage from NPR and local newspapers. Broad audience attendance. CCP process was challenged by some participants, but an attorney spoke up and said we were following proper process. Reminder that the status of CCP development will be on Regional Planning website. (https://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/refuges/nbrc.php)
- Kudos to Toni Griffin for her leadership and guidance on the National Bison Range CCP development.

Prairie Zone (KS, NE, SD, ND, eastern MT): Barbara Boyle

- Participated with Deb Williams and Amy Thornburg in the SD Range Management Workshop for Professionals hosted by the SD Range Management Society and NRCS.
- Worked with Amy Thornburg, planning team and Project Leaders to develop draft agenda for the Project Leader meeting.
- Dominic Barrett developed with assistance from the Farming Working Group comments to draft policy for Cooperative Agreements for Agricultural practices.

Partners for Fish and Wildlife: Patrick McKinney, acting for Heather Johnson

- Heather presented at the CO-WY-UT joint fisheries meeting in Grand Junction Colorado. Bill Noonan and Bob Timberman also attended the meeting on behalf of the PFW program.
- Mike Disney and staff participated in the Monarch Conservation Summit. There were 65 participants at the Summit and it was very successful. The group worked on the draft KS State-wide pollinator conservation plan.

Policy and Budget Development: Gina Martinez

- Participated at the National Refuge Budget Chiefs meeting last week. There are several new budget chiefs, so it was a great opportunity to share information, inform business processes across regional boundaries, and outline expectations.
- FY17 budget allocations starting to arrive from HQ. Refuge Chiefs are meeting this week to discuss FY17 budgets so we are targeting field allocations in two weeks to allow them a chance to review and discuss.
- Patti and Gina will be meeting with Katy Hopper, HQ Realty Budget Chief, on Friday to discuss Reality financial management issues.
- Reminder: Mandatory training deadlines are getting close. Be sure to log into DOI Learn and complete mandatory training before the due dates.

Realty: Greg Langer

- Last week had Realty Chiefs' meeting in the San Luis Valley, CO. Priority was to plan FY19 budgets.
- FY18 - zero project dollars for LWCF in the President's budget. More to come.
- FY17 – about half the LWCF dollars are pushed out. Other half should be pushed out shortly
- Mon-Wed in South Dakota with Barbara. Visiting with Sand Lake NWR and Realty staff.

People, Planning, and Policy: Dee Emmons

- **Cultural Resources:** Meg Van Ness
    - Planning a trip to Tewaukon, Waubay, and Madison in the coming weeks. Tewaukon and Waubay have had numerous projects involving the local tribal entities regarding proposed projects and on-going construction projects (Tewaukon headquarters).
- **Planning and Policy:** Kelly Hogan
    - Laura King will be attending the Bear River MBR habitat management planning meeting this week.
    - Planning folks facilitated the public meetings last week for the National Bison Range CCP.
- **Visitor Services and Outreach:** Dee Emmons
    - National Get Outdoors Day was last weekend. Delissa coordinated the FWS participation at Denver's Get Outdoors Day. The event went well.
    - Continue to work on the VSO levels guidance for R6 field stations.
    - Dee and Melvie will be going to the San Luis Valley NWRC next week to review/discuss their visitor services program.

External Affairs: Ryan Moehring

- Todd Wilkinson, a syndicated reporter, was at Red Rocks NWR.
- Neil Shook featured in recent NPR story talking about FWS programs and the technical support provided for landowners.
- Reminder: Please coordinate with Ryan if folks are being contacted directly by national reporters or media wishing to discuss controversial news.

Realty:

- Greg is out instructing at NCTC thru Wednesday

People, Planning, and Policy:

- Cultural Resources: In the San Luis Valley the first part of the week.
- Planning and Policy:
  - Toni Griffin is on a detail with the National Park Service for 120 days.
  - The team is working on scheduling a CCP meeting for National Bison Range staff at the end of July and then a meeting with cooperating agencies in late August.
- Visitor Services and Outreach:
  - We are finalizing the regional comments on the draft Service Sign Handbook this week.
  - There are a good number of folks interested in attending the VSO workshop this December - more information to come soon.

Facilities: notes from Chris Hotaling

1. Facility Vidyo sessions will start in October. There will be one topic per month that will be offered two – three times a month to accommodate various schedules. The first quarter topics will be FM work orders, real property data sheets, and road inventory (pre-inspection and route ID process).
2. Facilities data call schedule:
   a. October
      - Deferred maintenance project requests
      - Transportation
      - VFE
   b. November
      - Heavy equipment rental projects
      - Vehicle Purchase
      - Heavy equipment purchase
3. SAMMS module 7.6 is coming on-line and is being tested right now and it completely changes the look and feel of SAMMS.
   - There is an outstanding question whether this will require work orders for heavy equipment and fleet over a certain amount or not. Stay tuned.
4. New Asset Priority Index (API) scoring method will be out in the 1st Quarter 2018. All real property will have to be re-ranked in accordance with the new guidance.
5. R6 will be getting a federal highways transportation scholar to assist in the Roads realignment in early FY2018.

Policy and Budget Development: Gina Martinez

- All FY2017 allocations are out except for DM and PCS, which will be forthcoming once the final figures are in.
    - HQ - Fort Collins just received their final allocations last week so they will be working this week to get allocations out to the regions for approved projects
- Budget Specialists did a great job completing the 3rd quarter UDO review. Thank you!
- Org charts certification - we are awaiting guidance from HR on the org chart exercise that is typically due in October. Stay tuned.
- There is a new tool coming for EPAP's in FY2018. It is being tested in a couple of regions currently. Stay tuned for additional information.
- Year-end
    - 8/4, modification to financial assistance awards are due to CGS
    - 8/10
        - Delivery/Task orders below $500K
        - Goods $3,500 - $25,000
        - Modifications to contracts for goods/services
        - New Inter-agency agreements (agreements with Federal agencies outside of DOI)
        - Services $2,500 - $25,000
    - 8/31, modifications to Inter-agency agreements
    - RO Reminder - RO Divisions have a year-end cut-off of 8/1 to get all purchasing requests including charge card purchasing

Realty: Greg Langer

People, Planning, and Policy:

- **Cultural Resources:** Meg Van Ness
    - Meg did a survey at the San Luis Valley NWR Complex last week and found three cultural resources sites.
- **Planning and Policy:** Kelly Hogan
    - Holding a staff meeting at NBR this week (Tuesday) for the CCP.
- **Visitor Services and Outreach:** Dee Emmons
    - Submitted comments via DTS on the draft Service Sign Handbook on Friday.
    - Delissa and I are traveling to BRR next week to work with them on the Urban Evaluation process.

External Affairs: Kate Miyamoto

- Kate is extending her detail with R6 NWRS to August 4th.
- There was an article about the Preble's jumping mouse and Rocky Flats NWR on Sunday.
- Animal Planet is interested in filming black-footed ferret surveys at Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR in late August, early September. More details to come.
- Bear River MBR wants to do outreach about their habitat management plan, and they are working with EA.

- Edits were completed HAPET/NPWRC whooping crane manuscript and returned to the editors if Condor for consideration.
- Ned Wright is coordinating with Mike Artman to get aerial photography and satellite imagery for the Wyoming toad conservation area. Shooting for completion by late August/September.

Refuge Law Enforcement: David Bonham

- I will be in Tuesday and Wednesday this week and traveling to National Elk Refuge for the Eclipse Detail on Thursday.
- There has been a 30 day top down review of the Refuge Law Enforcement Program requested by Shawn Sanchez. Review due date is September 9th.

Policy and Budget Development: Jolene Beaudry for Gina Martinez

- The only PRs CGS will accept are modifications to Inter-agency agreements (outside of DOI) and the cut-off date for those is 8/31.
    - CGS is currently working a little over 300 open PRs. Several of the COs and Grants Officers are currently working 25-30 assigned PRs. The ones who have less are working large $ construction or service acquisitions...while also administering already awarded and ongoing construction efforts. Just like in recent years, there is a strong likelihood we will end up with carry-over acquisitions into FY-18.
- Wade is waiting for the last of the heavy equipment POs to be issued so that the final proceeds can be applied.
    - With regard to proceeds, we are giving up approximately $12K in proceeds that we don't have qualifying purchases for. These proceeds will go out to other programs within the region and then nationally on 8/18.

People, Planning, and Policy:

- **Cultural Resources:** Meg Van Ness
    - Project work continues as usual.
- **Planning and Policy:** Kelly Hogan
    - The team is working on preparing for several CCP-related meetings for the National Bison Range.
- **Visitor Services and Outreach:** Dee Emmons
    - The review period for the VSO levels guidance is extended from August 18 to August 25.

External Affairs: Ryan Moehring

- Sylvatic Plague Vaccine Partnership Appreciation Event 8/15 at Ferret Center. RMA will be honored alongside all other partners. Colorado Public Radio, Colorado Ag News Network will be covering the event.
- Songscape: Bear River dates have been set. Oct 14-18. Conner Youngblood is the artist.
- Sylvatic Plague Vaccine media demonstration at UL Bend NWR August 29th. Associated Press and Montana Public Radio are confirmed. A large network may also accompany.
- Animal Planet Season 5 - Dr. Jeff, Rocky Mountain Vet is coming to RMA September 6.

- Some R4 Officers are being released from their assignments to return home to prepare for Hurricane Iram
- We expect to have more Mission Assignments for ESF-13 deployments once Irma hits landfall in south Florida
- A Google survey was sent out to all officer with a Sept. 26 completion date. The survey is intended to gather information on Home-to-Work Authorizations. This data is to be used to help determine to best management practices for Officers having a take home vehicle.

Policy and Budget Development: Gina Martinez

- On Thursday, 8/31, the FY2018 per diem rates were loaded into Concur. They should now be visible and updated for travel scheduled for 10/1 and later.
- Travel Clarification
    - If a traveler in TDY status has an accident with their POV, they are not able to get any additional reimbursement because the POV mileage rate includes insurance, depreciation, and other items. Thus, the traveler is responsible for their car insurance deductible, if any, and that deductible is not reimbursable by the government. See GSBCA 14656-TRAV - https://www.gsbca.gsa.gov/travel/t1465612.txt
    - If the government is at fault for the accident (e.g., pothole on a refuge causes a flat tire or a tree falls on POV), the employee could file a tort claim through Solicitor's office (can't claim it in Concur).

Realty: Greg Langer

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People, Planning, and Policy: (Reported by Dee Emmons)

Introduction of Alice Garrett, Special Assistant to the NWRS ARD/DARD in Region 1. Alice is working with Headquarters on two filming projects. The first filming project involves developing a 30-second and a 2-3 minute film that provides an introduction to the NWRS. The second filming project, to happen over the next year, will involve filming several 2-3 minute films at a couple of urban national wildlife refuges.

- **Cultural Resources:** Meg Van Ness
    - Nothing to report.
- **Planning and Policy:** Kelly Hogan
    - The team was up in Montana last week holding several meetings related to the National Bison Range Complex CCPs. There were several meetings with cooperating agencies and a public meeting in Missoula.
- **Visitor Services and Outreach:** Dee Emmons
    - Dee and Mary were both up in Missoula last week for the NBR CCP-related meetings.
    - The Sandhills Prairie Refuge Association (Friends Group for Fort Niobrara NWR Complex) recently completed a mentoring visit.

External Affairs: Ryan Moehring

- Colorado Public Radio feature last week on RMA/BFFs has generated lots of interest.

- 9NEWS Denver at RMA Tuesday night for a story on black-footed ferret surveys. Great job, David and Nick!
- Animal Planet at RMA Wednesday night for a story on black-footed ferret surveys
- Two Denver Post articles on RMA this week: one on bison and another on black-footed ferret recovery. Great job, David and the Ferret Center folks!
- Decent coverage leading up to Bison Range CCP meetings.
- Songscape: Bear River MIgratory Bird Refuge planning is on schedule. Kathi and Bob have been most helpful.
- No joint news release on Upper Souris/Des Lacs, per the state.
- Trout Unlimited put together a fantastic page about Seedskadee as part of their Great American Places initiative. Major kudos to Tom!

Policy and Budget Development: Gina Martinez

- Happy FY2018 New Year!!!!
- Preliminary figures are in for FY2017; 1121 and 126X accounts had a 98% obligation rate (excluding DM balance)! Excellent job given the fact that the region received our allocation 105 days before close out. Thank you to everyone!
- An email will be coming this week with a list of PPR's that were still in the que and did not get processed by 9/22. There will be instructions on which PPR's we want recommitted and which PPR's will need to be resubmitted to the R6 Refuges PR Team. Just some gee wiz info:
    - Nationally there were 543 PR lines de-obligated (322 actual PR's), which totalled $28.9 million) - 27 PR's totalling $1.76 million were R6; 19 PR's totalling $1.56 million were R6 NWRS
    - 418 of the 543 lines are eligible for re-commitment in the new year (this means CGS had started taking action on them but couldn't complete the order by 9/22 at 4:00 MST)
        - NWRS has less than 10 PR lines that are eligible for automatic re-commitment
        - There were approximately 17 PR lines that were in CGS that had not been initiated before 9/22 at 4:00 MST. If these are still needed, R6 offices will need to submit a new PPR package to the R6 Refuges PR Team.
        - Our colleagues in CGS did a great job for us. We could not have reached our successful obligation rate without them!!!!!
- As a reminder, it is performance evaluation time. For most employees, the FY2017 performance evaluations are to be done by 10/31; FY2018 performance plans are to be signed by 11/30. Guidance on performance plans, evaluations, and awards is forthcoming.

Realty: Greg Langer

- Nothing to report

People, Planning, and Policy:

- **Cultural Resources:** Meg Van Ness
    - No updates.
- **Planning and Policy:** Kelly Hogan
    - National Bison Range CCP VIsion and Goals meeting will be November 7.
    - Contracts have been awarded for the writing/editing and NEPA work for the NBR CCP.
- **Visitor Services and Outreach:** Dee Emmons
    - National Wildlife Refuge Week is October 8-14 this year, with the theme of "Find Your Way," linking this year's events with the 2018 50th anniversaries of the national trails and rivers systems.
    - On Friday, U.S. District Judge Christine Arguello dismissed the lawsuit filed against the Service related to opening Rocky Flats NWR to the public (http://www.denverpost.com/2017/09/30/rocky-flats-lawsuit-dismissed/). In response, a rally was held at the state Captiol on Saturday by opponents to the opening of the Refuge (http://www.denverpost.com/2017/09/30/rocky-flats-protest-saturday/).