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Powerpoint

2 messages

Reid, Tim <tim_reid@nps.gov>

Mon, Apr 23, 2018 at 3:14 PM

To: Scott Bischke <scott@emountainworks.com>

Cc: PJ White <pj_white@nps.gov>, Rick Wallen <rick_wallen@nps.gov>, jennifer_carpenter <jennifer_carpenter@nps.gov>


Scott -

Attached is the powerpoint that the NPS would like to use to lead off the 1:45 Winter Ops section.

Thx -

Tim

Tim Reid
Bison Management Coordinator
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 **BisonSlides_IBMP_WinterOps_NPS_4-25.pptx**
805K

Scott Bischke <scott@emountainworks.com>

Mon, Apr 23, 2018 at 3:50 PM

To: "Reid, Tim" <tim_reid@nps.gov>

Cc: PJ White <pj_white@nps.gov>, Rick Wallen <rick_wallen@nps.gov>, jennifer_carpenter <jennifer_carpenter@nps.gov>

Hi Tim, Got it and checked it and looks great. Thank you and NPS for being so timely. Scott

Scott Bischke

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[Quoted text hidden]

NPS Recommendations 2017

- ~4,800 bison: ~3,970 north/~850 central
- Remove up to 1,250 bison breeding in north
- Decrease numbers to 4,200-4,400 after calving
- No removals in west due to lower numbers
- Allow bison to distribute on landscape and hunt
- Maintain 250-400 bison in Gardiner basin
- Begin culling bison in north when migration deemed sufficient to support hunting and culling
- Conduct larger culls if there is a larger migration

17/18 Winter Operations Plan

- Manage for a decreasing population
- Optimize harvest while assuring combined hunt/cull take of 600 to 900 bison
- Reduce impacts of bison captures on hunt
- Monthly removal goals:
 - 75-115 by the end of November
 - 225-335 by the end of December
 - 372-560 by the end of January
 - 522-785 by the end of February
 - 600-900 by March 15

Harvests

December 2017: Hunters began harvesting bison west of the park (NPS recommended zero)

Removal goals/reported harvests (north):

- November 30: Goal = 75-115; Harvest = 8
- December 31: Goal = 225-335; Harvest = 8
- January 31: Goal = 372-560; Harvest = 21
- February 28: Goal = 522-785; Harvest = 146
- March 15: Goal = 600-900; Harvest = 206

➤ Reported harvests lagged well behind removal goals by mid-February

Captures/Culls

- Winter conditions led to a large migration into Gardiner basin during late February/March
- NPS began capturing on February 16 and captured ~800 bison over a 3-week period
- Another 800+ bison in the Gardiner basin (Mammoth-Yankee Jim) during captures
- NOTES:
 - Harvest higher after captures began (77 bison harvested 30 days before; 172 after)
 - Many harvests and reports after March 11, when captures ended

Harvests and Culls

	MT/ NPS	CSKT	Nez Perce	ShoBan	CTUR	Yakama	BFN
Hunt (372)							
North	37*	2	111	35	28	40	32
West	22*	45	4	2	0	8	6
Subtotal	59	47	115	37	28	48	38
<small>* includes 6 bison which 3 passed and 3 were culled</small>							
Cull (796)							
Slaughter	694	Transferred to the CSKT for processing Includes 25 female and 73 male yearlings					
Quarantine	98						
Pen Mort	4						
Total	1,168	2018: Harvest 32%; Culls 68% 2012-2017: Harvest 50%; Culls 50%					

WHY > 600-900

- Winter severity exceeded predictions.
- Unusually large migration in late February allowed continued capture and hunter success with > 500 bison north of park at times.
- Telemetric data indicating that bison migrating into Gardiner bison were associated with the northern breeding area.
- NPS holds that a long-term average of ~4,200 bison allows balance of myriad demands/values surrounding bison and provides opportunity for progress on issues that have been difficult to advance, including:
 - Full dispersal into the conservation area
 - Reduced hunting pressure near boundary/better hunt success and optics
 - Mitigation of capture/hunt conflict
 - Reduction of cull size and shipments to slaughter
- The removal of 1,100+ bison provided the highest chance of a summer 2018 count near 4,200 bison compared to other alternatives.
 - Summer 2018: Predict ~4,200 +/- 500 bison post-calving
 - <4,500 bison for the first time since 2012

Conclusions/Considerations

The combined use of hunting and culling over the past six years has reduced bison numbers toward the NPS objective (4,200), while supporting hunter harvest (41% of removals) and no >800 to slaughter in any one winter.

Future removals to stabilize population growth could be one-half of what was necessary to reduce the population size (i.e., 400-500 instead of 1,000 – 1,200).

Consider:

Removal of fewer bison via capture/culling can shift focus to reducing hunt pressure near boundary and advance other efforts:

- As outlined in the 2000 IBMP ROD, establish temporary capture facilities near Yankee Jim Canyon. Facilitates bison distribution over available landscape, habitat learning, and a dispersed hunt.
- Limit capture at Stephens Creek primarily to support quarantine or research.
- Utilize quarantine facilities at Stephens Creek, Corwin Springs, and Fort Peck Reservation to reduce shipments to slaughter.