

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
STATE OF MONTANA

BRIAN SCHWEITZER  
GOVERNOR



JOHN BOHLINGER  
LT. GOVERNOR

November 2, 2011

Ervin Carlson  
President, InterTribal Buffalo Council  
2497 West Chicago Street  
Rapid City, SD 57702

RECEIVED

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InterTribal Bison Cooperative

Dear Ervin,

I write to bring to your attention a cooperative opportunity to further the mission of the InterTribal Buffalo Council as it works to restore, preserve, and protect bison in Indian Country. I share your commitment to the restoration of bison on Indian lands, where spiritual and cultural traditions with these great beasts can be rekindled.

I know you are aware of the interagency quarantine program for Yellowstone bison, whereby disease-free bison are being made available for such restoration efforts. Also, I know you are aware that Yellowstone bison are a precious national resource, representing the largest herd of the handful of remaining herds of genetically-pure bison.

I have initiated discussions with Department of Interior Secretary Ken Salazar regarding the idea of the National Bison Range at Moiese serving as one repository for bison coming out of quarantine, and potentially becoming a staging center for the restoration of genetically-pure, disease-free bison on suitable reservations and public lands across the West.

Recent tests confirm that the herd at Moiese, like most across the country, contains cattle genes. I have proposed that any Yellowstone bison sent to Moiese be segregated from the existing herd to maintain genetic integrity. Moiese could choose to maintain this segregation through appropriate management measures, or they could choose to draw down their existing herd as the new herd grows. Other key points and details of the proposal include, but are not necessarily limited to, these elements:

- Moiese seems an ideal site for such a repository, given its status as the National Bison Range, its historical relationship with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and within the Department of Interior, its long-established public acceptance, its management expertise, and its ability to provide proper acreage, facilities, and care.
- Approximately 75 to 125 bison would be relocated initially.
- Twenty-five percent of the offspring would be available to the State of Montana for potential future bison conservation efforts.
- Given the long history and tradition of bison on the National Bison Range, very limited environmental analysis would be necessary for such a relocation.

- This new herd at the National Bison Range, along with any derivative herds, could serve as the repository for reintroduction to, or augmentation of, the Yellowstone herd, should that scenario ever become necessary.
- No element of this proposal would preclude the direct relocation of quarantine program Yellowstone bison, now or in the future, to other reservations or public lands.

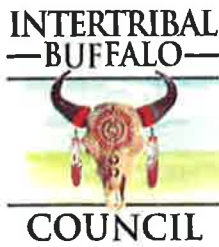
Finer points and details need to be worked out, and I welcome your ideas to that effect. Presently, however, I am interested to know the level of support of this concept from the ITBC. If the idea meets your approval, I would very much appreciate a letter in response that communicates your support.

I believe this is a wonderful opportunity for cooperation and meaningful progress on a matter that is long past due for good solutions. Thank you for your consideration of my request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Schweitzer". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "B" and a long, sweeping underline that ends in a sharp point.

BRIAN SCHWEITZER  
Governor



InterTribal Buffalo Council  
2497 West Chicago Street  
Rapid City, SD 57702  
Phone: (605) 394-9730  
Fax: (605) 394-7742  
www.itbcbison.com

November 29, 2011

Governor Brian Schweitzer  
Office of the Governor  
Montana State Capitol Bldg.  
P.O. Box 200801  
Helena MT 59620-0801

Dear Governor Schweitzer:

The InterTribal Buffalo Council (ITBC) Board of Directors has reviewed and discussed your proposal to partner with the United States Department of Interior and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes to utilize the National Bison Range serving as a repository for Yellowstone buffalo released from quarantine. As you are aware, the ITBC has been involved in first, the Greater Yellowstone Inter-Agency Brucellosis Committee and now, the Inter-Agency Brucellosis Management Plan work group as the Native American voice for buffalo/bison protection, preservation and restoration issues. ITBC's primary concern is to prevent the needless killing of buffalo that forage outside the boundaries of the Yellowstone Park and seek options that will preserve and enhance the genetic integrity of the Yellowstone buffalo/bison.

In the spirit of protection, preservation and restoration of genetically pure buffalo, ITBC supports the concept of continuing a quarantine program that will eventually result in the distribution of disease-free Yellowstone bison to Indian Tribes. ITBC member Tribes have long-awaited the point when Yellowstone bison might be awarded and relocated to Indian lands throughout the west. Thus, ITBC supports the concept of utilizing the National Bison Range as a repository for disease-free Yellowstone bison with the objective of eventually awarding the disease free animals to Tribes.

While ITBC supports the overall concept, we must express the following caveats:

1. ITBC does not want the proposal to interfere or delay the current prospect of awarding disease-free Yellowstone bison to the Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the Fort Peck Reservation or the Gros Ventre and Assiniboine Tribe of the Fort Belknap Reservation.

#### Member Tribes

- Blackfeet • Cheyenne & Arapaho Tribes of OK • Cheyenne River Sioux • Chippewa Cree Tribe of Rocky Boy's Reservation •
- Confederated Salish & Kootenai • Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla • Crow Creek Sioux • Crow Tribe • Flandreau Santee Sioux •
- Fort Belknap Gros Ventre & Assiniboine • Fort Peck Tribes • Ho-Chunk Nation • Iowa Tribe of OK • Jicarilla Apache • Kalispel • Lower Brule Sioux •
- Mesa Grande Band of Mission Indians • Modoc Tribe of OK • Nambé' Pueblo • Nez Perce • Northern Arapaho •
- Northern Cheyenne • Oglala Sioux Tribe • Omaha Tribe of NE • Onelda Nation of WI • Picuris Pueblo • Pit River Tribe • Pojoaque Pueblo •
- Ponca Tribe of NE • Prairie Band of Potawatomi Nation • Prairie Island Dakota • Rosebud Sioux • Round Valley Tribes • Sac & Fox of the Mississippi in Iowa •
- Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community • San Juan Pueblo • Sandia Pueblo • Santee Sioux of NE • Seneca Cayuga Tribe of OK •
- Shoshone-Bannock • Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate • Southern Ute • Spirit Lake Sioux • Spokane • Standing Rock Sioux •
- Teton-Atlatlat Band of Chippewa •

2. ITBC does not want the proposal to interfere with the treaty hunting rights to Yellowstone bison of the Yakima, Nez Perce, Shoshone Bannock and CSKT Tribes.

Further, ITBC actively supported the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes in their long-standing negotiations with the Department of Interior to assume management responsibility of the National Bison Range. ITBC, along with the CSKT, have been disappointed by the Department of Interior's hesitation to allow the CSKT complete management authority of the National Bison Range. Therefore, we are hopeful this proposal does not affect the fragile co-management agreement currently in place between the Department of Interior and the CSKT.

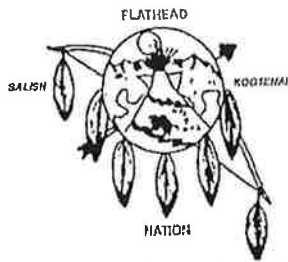
Finally, we understand that the CSKT have expressed a desire to protect the current NBR herd due to its cultural and historical significance to the Tribe. Thus, we support the use of the NBR for Yellowstone bison if concerns of the CSKT are resolved.

As you and I have a long history in working together on difficult issues affecting Tribes, I am confident we can work together on your proposal to forward a meaningful, tribally accepted alternative to the current ongoing Yellowstone bison management discussion. Thank you for directly conferring with the ITBC in this critical matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me at (406) 450-2443 or Jim Stone, ITBC Executive Director, at (605) 394-9730, or our legal counsel, Majel Russell, at (406) 259-8611.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ervin Carlson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ervin Carlson  
President



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

THE CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES  
OF THE FLATHEAD NATION

P.O. BOX 278  
Pablo, Montana 59855  
(406) 275-2700  
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www.cskt.org



A People of Vision

TRIBAL COUNCIL MEMBERS:

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Joe Durglo – Vice Chair  
Steve Lozar – Secretary  
Jim Malatare – Treasurer  
Michel Kenmille  
Carole Lankford  
Reuben A. Mathias  
Charles L. Morigeau  
Terry L. Pitts  
James Steele Jr.

November 9, 2011

Governor Brian Schweitzer  
State Capitol, Room 204  
P.O. Box 200801  
Helena, MT 59620-0801

*Via facsimile no.: (406) 444-5529*

Original to be sent by overnight express

**Re: National Bison Range**

Dear Governor Schweitzer,

On behalf of the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes (CSKT, or Tribes), I am writing with regard to your request last month to the Department of the Interior (DOI) to consider moving Yellowstone bison, which are currently being held as part of the quarantine feasibility study, to the National Bison Range (NBR) here on the Flathead Indian Reservation. Publicly, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks has intended to relocate these bison to two State properties and two Montana Indian Reservations. An Environmental Assessment was authorized and completed for transfer to one or more of those four original destinations.

The Tribes were just recently notified by both you and FWS about Montana's request to relocate the bison to the NBR. It is our understanding that the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) does not support the request as proposed. At this time, from what we currently know of the request, CSKT has questions about the process. We believe that public review and comment would be crucial for a thorough evaluation of the proposal. We do not know what steps have been taken, or are under consideration, on the part of the Federal government or the Montana State government regarding compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and the Montana Environmental Policy Act, respectively. We believe that proceeding under those statutes would not only address public review and comment issues, but would also better position all parties to consider and evaluate Montana's request. Those statutes accord with our own Tribal laws regarding public notice and comment.


The Tribes have a long-standing history with both the Yellowstone and NBR bison herds. We continue to exercise treaty hunting rights with the Yellowstone herd. The NBR herd descends

National Bison Range  
November 9, 2011  
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from bison initially saved from extinction by CSKT Tribal members. As a partner in the Inter-Agency Bison Management Plan (IBMP), CSKT has been on record in support of the relocation of the quarantined Yellowstone bison to the Fort Peck and Fort Belknap Reservations, in accordance with the wishes of their respective Tribal governments. The Montana proposal would appear to complicate or preclude this IBMP recommendation. We are also concerned that the proposal, if not handled properly, could complicate our ability to return to a productive partnership with FWS at the NBR. As you know, we are currently in final stages of negotiating a new Tribal Self-Governance agreement with FWS regarding NBR operations.

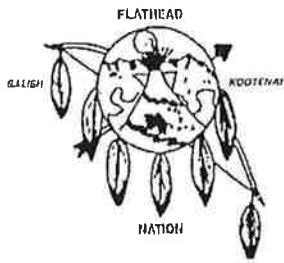
I realize that CSKT has not formally been asked for our input or position. However, given our history with both the Yellowstone and NBR bison, we appreciate your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,



E. L. "Bud" Moran, Chairman  
Tribal Council

cc: Kenneth L. Salazar, Secretary of the Interior  
Rachel Jacobson, Assistant Secretary, Fish, Wildlife and Parks (Acting)  
Dan Ashe, Director, USFWS



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Reuben A. Mathias  
Charles L. Morigeau  
Terry L. Pitts  
James Steele Jr.

November 9, 2011

Mr. Kenneth L. Salazar, Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C St., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

*Via facsimile no.: (202) 208-5048*

Original to be sent by overnight express

**Re: National Bison Range**

Dear Secretary Salazar,

On behalf of the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes (CSKT, or Tribes), I am writing with regard to a proposal that we understand the Department of the Interior (DOI) is reviewing. I understand that, a few weeks ago, DOI was asked by the State of Montana to consider moving Yellowstone bison, currently being held as part of the quarantine feasibility study, to the National Bison Range (NBR) here on the Flathead Indian Reservation. Publicly, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks has intended to relocate these bison to two State properties and two Montana Indian Reservations. An Environmental Assessment was authorized and completed for transfer to one or more of those four original destinations.

The Tribes were just recently notified by the State and FWS about Montana's request to relocate the bison to the NBR. It is our understanding that the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) does not support the request as proposed. At this time, from what we currently know of the request, CSKT has questions about the process. We believe that public review and comment would be crucial for a thorough evaluation of the proposal. We do not know what steps have been taken, or are under consideration, on the part of the Federal government or the Montana State government regarding compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and the Montana Environmental Policy Act, respectively. We believe that proceeding under those statutes would not only address public review and comment issues, but would also better position all parties to consider and evaluate Montana's request. Those statutes accord with our own Tribal laws regarding public notice and comment.

National Bison Range

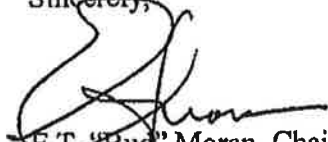
November 9, 2011

Page 2

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I realize that CSKT has not formally been asked for our input or position. However, given our history with both the Yellowstone and NBR bison, we appreciate your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,



E.T. "Bud" Moran, Chairman  
Tribal Council

cc: Governor Brian Schweitzer  
Rachel Jacobson, Assistant Secretary, Fish, Wildlife and Parks (Acting)  
Dan Ashe, Director, USFWS