

## **Custer Gallatin National Forest, Draft Revised Forest Plan (March 2019).**

### **Bison (WLBI)**

#### **Desired Conditions (FW-DC-WLBI)**

01 Native bison have access to forage, security and movement corridors to facilitate distribution of the species to suitable habitats within the plan area.

02 Suitable habitat accommodates bison migrating out of Yellowstone National Park in winter, as well as supporting year-round bison presence on the Custer Gallatin National Forest. Adequate connecting corridors exist between suitable habitats to facilitate bison on the landscape with sufficient distribution to be resilient to stressors, adaptable to changing conditions, and contributing to stable or increasing genetic diversity.

03 Educational materials, including signage at trailheads and campgrounds where bison may occur, are available to help forest users understand wild bison behavior and act accordingly in order to avoid conflicts.

04 Alternative D: Bison are present year round with sufficient numbers and adequate distribution to provide a self-sustaining population on the Custer Gallatin National Forest.

#### **Goal (FW-GO-WLBI)**

01 The Forest Service engages with State, Federal, Tribal, and other willing partners to expand the science of bison ecology, foster awareness of the important biological, ecological and cultural roles of bison on the landscape, and cooperatively develop adaptive strategies to manage bison and their habitats to facilitate natural movement of bison into and between suitable habitats.

#### **Objectives (FW-OBJ-WLBI)**

01 Alternatives B and C: Complete one habitat improvement project within, or for the purpose of creating or connecting, suitable bison habitat every three years.

Alternative D: Complete three habitat improvement projects within, or for the purpose of creating or connecting, suitable bison habitat per year.

Alternative E: No objective for bison habitat improvement.

#### **Guidelines (FW-GDL-WLBI)**

01 Alternatives B, C and D: To promote bison expansion within management zones, vegetation treatment projects and management actions taken to resolve bison-livestock conflicts should favor bison within these zones.

Alternative E: To minimize impacts to livestock operations, vegetation treatment projects and management actions taken to resolve bison-livestock conflicts should favor livestock.

02 To facilitate progressive expansion of bison management zones over time, bison habitat improvement projects should be strategically placed within and in close proximity to existing management zone boundaries.

03 Alternatives B, C and E: To facilitate bison expansion into unoccupied, suitable habitat, management actions should not impede bison movement unless needed to achieve interagency bison population and distribution.

Alternative D: To facilitate bison expansion into unoccupied, suitable habitat, management actions should not impede bison movement.

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#### **4.4.1 Ecosystems**

##### **Table 69. Ecosystems**

#### **Wildlife (WL)**

##### **Selected Plan Components**

#### **Bison**

FW-DC-WLBI-02

FW-DC-WLBI-03

FW-OBJ-WLBI-01

#### **Monitoring Question**

MON-WL-07

What management actions have occurred to improve / facilitate bison movements and avoidance of human/bison conflicts?

\* 36 CFR 219.12(a)(5) - ii, iv

#### **Implementation indicators**

##### **Bison management actions**

- # and types, locations of actions that improve or facilitate opening corridors for bison movement
- # bison/human conflicts
- # and location of educational outreach materials distributed and/or posted

#### **Data Source/ Storage (Interval of data collection)**

FACTS, WIT, INFRA (2 year intervals)

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