

# YELLOWSTONE BISON POPULATION MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

This report summarizes the management activities associated with implementation of the Record of Decision for the Final Environmental Impact Statement and Bison Management Plan for the State of Montana and Yellowstone National Park for the time period October 1, 2002 through September 30, 2003. The reporting period for this summary is **17 May 2003 through 30 May 2003**.

## Weather and Snow Pack Conditions

No weather report will be included due to the ending of daily weather reporting from ranger stations in the park as of April 30.

## Monitoring

### North Boundary Area

Date	Group size & Age/Sex	Location
5/17/03	3 Bulls	██████ Ranch north of Gardiner, MT in Eagle/Bear Creek area

### West Boundary Area

No monitoring occurred in the West boundary area during this report period.

## Hazing

### North Boundary Area

No hazing occurred in the North boundary area during this report period.

### West Boundary Area

On May 21, 2003, a total of 160 bison were hazed from the Horse Butte area, Duck Creek, Madison Arm and South Fork of the Madison River back into the park via personnel on horseback, ATV, and helicopter. Participating personnel included 8 DOL agents, 2 GACO SO personnel, 1 USFS officer, 3 MT FWP officers, and 3 NPS rangers.

On May 22, 2003, a total of 93 bison (mostly bulls) were hazed approximately 2.5-3 miles back into the park from the Madison Arm and Duck Creek areas. Personnel involved included 5 DOL agents, 2 GACO SO officers, 1 USFS officer, and 2 NPS rangers.

On May 27, 2003, 19 mixed bison were hazed from Horse Butte area, 1.5 miles back into the park. Three additional bull bison were hazed from Duck Creek 1-mile back into the park. Three DOL agents and 1 NPS ranger were on horseback. One MT FWP, 1 West Yellowstone PD and 1 USFS officer assisted with traffic control.

On May 28, 2003, NPS rangers assisted with bison hazing operations in the Horse Butte area as requested by DOL personnel. However, no bison were found outside the park in this area. Personnel involved included 5 DOL agents, 1 MT FWP officer, and 1 NPS ranger.

On May 29, 2003, a group of 8 mixed bison were hazed from Baker's Hole campground area back across the park boundary. Personnel involved in the operation included five DOL agents, 1 NPS ranger, and 1 USFS employee.

## Capture and Testing

### North Boundary Area

No capture and testing occurred in the North boundary area this reporting period.

### West Boundary Area

No capture and testing occurred in the West boundary area this reporting period.

## Bison Transported to Slaughter

This reporting period:	<b>0</b> (West)	Total since October 1, 2002:	<b>12</b> (West)
	<b>0</b> (North)		<b>231</b> (North)

## Interagency Bison Management Plan Shooting Operations

Shooting operations may be conducted as part of the Interagency Bison Management Plan (IBMP).

This reporting period:	<b>0</b> (West)	Total since October 1, 2002:	<b>1</b> (West)
	<b>0</b> (North)		<b>0</b> (North)

## Natural Mortality

Observations of natural mortality are usually limited to road corridors, incidental observations by NPS or field research personnel, or occasional observations from aircraft. Not all mortality reports are received in time for inclusion into the appropriate bi-weekly report and therefore are added to future reports.

Natural Mortality this reporting period – **1**      Natural Mortality since October 1, 2002 – **32**

### **1 unknown adult – 5/27/03 – Unknown causes**

- 1 female adult – 5/7/03 – natural unknown
- 1 female adult – 5/7/03 – natural unknown
- 1 female adult – 4/30/03 – fell through ice
- 1 unknown yearling – 4/30/03 – fell through ice
- 1 unknown newborn calf – 4/19/03 – died ~24 hours after birth
- 1 unknown – 4/16/03 – natural unknown
- 1 female yearling – 4/4/03 – possible drowning
- 1 male calf – 4/4/03 – possible drowning
- 1 female calf – 4/3/03 – natural unknown
- 1 male calf – 4/3/03 – natural unknown
- 1 calf – 3/23/03 – possible wolf kill
- 1 calf – 3/03 – wolf kill
- 1 unknown – 3/03 – wolf kill
- 1 calf – 3/15/03 – wolf kill
- 1 unknown – 3/15/03 – possible wolf kill
- 1 unknown adult – 3/11/03 – unknown causes
- 1 adult bull – 3/6/03 – wolf predation
- 1 unknown calf – 3/3/03 – unknown causes
- 1 adult female – 2/26/03 – probable wolf kill
- 1 adult female – 2/24/03 - winter kill
- 1 subadult male – 2/20/03 – fall from cliff
- 1 unknown adult – 2/16/03 – unknown causes
- 1 adult male – 2/16/03 – unknown causes
- 1 adult female - 2/14/03 – possible wolf kill

- 1 unknown age/sex – 1/30/03 – unknown causes
- 1 unknown adult – 1/30/03 - drowning
- 1 adult male – 1/30/03 - drowning
- 1 yearling female – 1/23/03 – probable wolf kill
- 1 adult male – 12/24/02 – possible wolf kill
- 1 adult male (10+ yrs) – 12/02/02 – possible wolf kill
- 1 unknown adult – 11/24/02 – drowning

## Other Mortality

Observations of OTHER mortalities are usually limited to road corridors, incidental observations by NPS or field research personnel, or occasional observations from aircraft. OTHER mortalities are mortalities that are not covered under Natural Mortalities or Management Removals and may include, but are not limited to, animal/vehicle collisions (MVA), research mortalities, or dispatching of sick or injured animals that pose safety concerns.

OTHER mortality this reporting period – **0**                      Total since October 1, 2002 – **6**

- 1 adult cow – 4/13/03 - MVA
- 1 adult bull – 4/13/03 - MVA
- 1 adult male – 3/9/03 – Snowmobile MVA/dispatched
- 1 adult female – 3/7/03 – Snowmobile MVA/dispatched
- 1 adult female – 11/30/02 - MVA
- 1 adult male – 11/14/02 – MVA