

Terms of Reference for the Sturgeon River Plains Bison Management Plan

Scope

The Sturgeon River Plains Bison Management Plan Coordinating Committee will develop a plan to manage bison in Prince Albert National Park and adjacent lands. The management plan will ensure the sustainability of the bison population and also provide guidelines to manage bison when they are in conflict with other resource users outside of Prince Albert National Park. The general public and all interested parties will have an opportunity to provide input and feedback throughout the planning stages. The draft management plan will be presented for approval to Sturgeon River Plains Bison Stewards, Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment, and Prince Albert National Park.

Vision for the Management Plan

The Sturgeon River Plains Bison population will be managed as a self-sustaining, naturally regulated, and free-ranging plains bison population that is genetically diverse and will persist in perpetuity as a natural part of the regional ecosystem.

Principles of the Coordinating Committee and the Advisory Committee

- The Coordinating Committee will draft a plan that will support the sustainability of the plains bison population in Prince Albert National Park and adjacent areas.
- The Advisory Committee will provide suggestions and feedback throughout the process and ensure their concerns are adequately addressed.
- The personal integrity, individual rights, interests and values of the participants and others will be respected.
- The process will provide a time for all to speak and all to listen.
- Advisory Committee members have the responsibility to keep their public constituency informed of developments and bring ideas and recommendations to the Coordinating Committee.
- Coordinating Committee members are committed to a collaborative approach to problem solving and whenever possible will achieve consensus when making recommendations or decisions.
- The Coordinating Committee will recommend and participate in opportunities for effective public discussion and communication.

- The lifespan of the Advisory Committee will be the duration of the management planning process. Subsequent to the completion of the management plan, members of the Advisory Committee will be put on standby and invited to participate in periodic public meetings to discuss the effectiveness of the plan and suggest necessary modifications. The frequency of these meetings will be specified in the management plan.
- The Coordinating Committee will continue to exist indefinitely and will be required to meet periodically because of the expected adaptive nature of the management plan.

Membership

- The Coordinating Committee will consist of one individual from each of the parties actively involved with managing the Sturgeon River Plains Bison Population:
 - Sturgeon River Plains Bison Stewards (Gord Vaadeland)
 - Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment (Rob Tether)
 - Parks Canada (Seth Cherry)

Each party in the Coordinating Committee should have one or two stand-in alternates available to contact if the primary Coordinating Committee member is temporarily unavailable. Alternates may also provide logistical and clerical support to primary Coordinating Committee members.

- The Advisory Committee will include individuals and parties that are directly affected by the Sturgeon River Plains Bison population and associated management actions and/or other parties interested in the long-term conservation of the population. When possible the same representative(s) from each party should consistently attend meetings and workshops related to bison management planning. However, alternates should be made available from each party and are encouraged to participate only when a primary Advisory Committee member from a given party is unable to attend. It is ultimately the responsibility of primary Advisory Committee members to ensure their respective parties are kept up-to-date with current management planning activities and the proceedings from each management planning meeting/workshop.

Organizations or Communities Participating on Advisory Committee
Canadian Bison Association
Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation
Rural Municipality of Big River
Rural Municipality of Canwood
Rural Municipality of Shellbrook
Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations
Prince Albert Grand Council
Agency Chiefs Tribal Council
Métis Nation of Saskatchewan
Local 108 – Métis Nation of Saskatchewan
Local 63 – Métis Nation of Saskatchewan
Big River First Nation
Ahtahkakoop Cree Nation
Sturgeon Lake First Nation
Nature Conservancy of Canada
Nature Saskatchewan
Ministry of Agriculture
Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation
Parkland Agri-Environmental Group
Prince Albert National Park and Area Destination Marketing Organization
Big River and Area Forestry Task Force
Saskatchewan Boreal Forest Learning Centre
Sturgeon River Plains Bison Stewards
Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment
Prince Albert National Park

Special guests may occasionally be invited to meetings to share their technical, scientific or other expertise that may be required by the Team.

Conflict of Interest

Team members will self-declare any conflict of interest they have with agenda items and remove themselves from the discussion.

Reimbursement of Expenses

Reimbursement of Expenses will be at the discretion of Parks Canada and Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment.

Consensus-building: procedures and principles to be overseen by contracted facilitator

- Decisions will generally be made by consensus (a decision in which everyone participates and which everyone can live with and support).
- The purpose of consensus building is to reach agreement.
- Discussions will focus on interests and concerns rather than positions and demands.
- Everyone is to have an equal opportunity to speak.
- Members should attempt to understand the interest of others whether they agree with them or not.
- Participants are committed to fully explore issues and search for solutions using a problem solving and consensus building approach.
- Members will express the interests of the group they represent.
- Participants, who do not agree with recommendations or decisions of the vast majority, will provide the reasons their interests are not accommodated by the general consensus of the group. The reasons will be recorded in the minutes.
- In the event consensus cannot be reached on a particular issue, decisions regarding that issue will be made by the Coordinating Committee. If consensus cannot be reached among the Coordinating Committee, then the agency having jurisdiction over the issue at hand will make the final decision.

Communication Strategy

Any contact from the media regarding the Bison Management Plan development will be directed to Rob Tether for Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment, Seth Cherry for Prince Albert National Park and Gord Vaadeland for the Sturgeon River Plains Bison Stewards.

All meeting minutes and other relevant information will be posted on the Bison Stewards website (<http://www.bisonstewards.ca/>). Meeting minutes will also be emailed to Advisory Team members. At the beginning of each meeting/workshop, minutes from the previous meeting will be tabled for approval by all participants.