



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

NEWS RELEASE

Montana/Dakotas North Central Montana District

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BLM responds to public by extending time to submit comments on APR bison proposal

(LEWISTOWN, Mont.) – Approximately 400 people attended the scoping meetings about the American Prairie Reserve’s grazing permit change proposal. The four meetings were held by the Bureau of Land Management.

The strong attendance clearly indicated the level of interest in the proposal the American Prairie Reserve (APR) submitted to the BLM asking to modify grazing permits.

“The BLM thanks the public for taking part in the scoping meetings. Your input is an important part of this Environmental Assessment process,” said BLM North Central Montana District Manager Mark Albers.

During the meetings a number of people stated the timing of the meetings and the scoping period was difficult, because the meetings were scheduled during a time when many ranchers were in the middle of calving.

The BLM will extend the scoping period for an additional month to allow the public sufficient time to study the issue and submit substantive scoping comments.

American Prairie Reserve controls private properties tied to 18 BLM grazing allotments in Chouteau, Fergus, Petroleum, Phillips, and Valley Counties. They have submitted a proposal asking the BLM to modify their grazing permits. The APR is seeking permission to: change the class of livestock from cattle to bison; allow for season-long grazing; fortify existing external boundary fences by replacing the second strand from the top with an electrified wire; and remove interior fences.

The BLM plans to analyze all 18 grazing allotments in one Environmental Assessment (EA) to consolidate efforts across the district and is asking the public to provide input on what needs to be analyzed in the EA. The BLM is asking for the public’s help in determining what it should analyze as it considers proposed changes. The most helpful comments are those that describe specific issues upon which the BLM should focus.

The scoping period has been extended to June 11, 2018. After scoping comments are received and reviewed, a Draft Environmental Assessment will be produced and released to the public for a 30-day review period. During that review period, BLM will host meetings to gather input from the public.

Scoping comments can be emailed to blm_mt_scoping_ncmd@blm.gov or mailed to: APR Scoping Comments, BLM Malta Field Office, 47285 Highway 2, Malta, MT 59538. For more information, go to <https://go.usa.gov/xQWBw>

Scoping comments may be subject to Freedom of Information Act requests. Do not include in your scoping comments personally identifiable information you do not want to be made public.

– BLM –

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The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land located primarily in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The agency’s mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of America’s public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. Diverse activities authorized on these lands generated \$75 billion in sales of goods and services throughout the American economy in fiscal year 2016—more than any other agency in the Department of the Interior. These activities supported more than 372,000 jobs.



Approximately 400 people attended the four scoping meetings about the American Prairie Reserve’s proposal held by the Bureau of Land Management. (BLM photo by Jonathan Moor) [CLICK-for-high-res-photo](#)