

**RESOLUTION
OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF
THE CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES
OF THE FLATHEAD RESERVATION, MONTANA**

A RESOLUTION _____

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TRIBAL COUNCIL OF THE CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES (“TRIBES”)

WHEREAS, the Tribes played an integral role in saving the North American plains bison from extinction by bringing some of the last wild bison in the country back to the Flathead Indian Reservation in the 1870’s and, through subsequent stewardship, growing them into a herd of hundreds of animals;

WHEREAS, the above-mentioned herd was free-ranging on the Flathead Indian Reservation up until the early 1900’s, when the Reservation was allotted and opened for non-Indian settlement, at which time the bison had to be sold as they could no longer range freely;

WHEREAS, attempts were made to sell the bison to the United States government, but Congress did not appropriate funds for the purchase;

WHEREAS, the bison were then sold to private parties and the Canadian government;

WHEREAS, the National Bison Range (Range) was established by the federal government in 1908 (35 Stat. 267; 16 U.S.C. § 671) on lands that were later held to have been unconstitutionally taken from the Tribes (*Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation, Montana v. United States*, 437 F.2d 458, 465 (Ct.Cl. 1971));

WHEREAS, on December 27, 2020, the United States enacted legislation to restore the National Bison Range to federal trust the federal government for the establishment of the Bison Range took ownership for the Tribes, which was the status of the land before it;

WHEREAS, the newly-enacted law requires the Tribes to have, at all times, a publicly available management plan for the land, bison and natural resources, which shall include actions to address management and control of invasive weeds;

WHEREAS, the Tribes were a cooperating agency for the September 2019 Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement which the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service developed for the National Bison Range, resulting in a final Comprehensive Conservation Plan approved by the Service on December 5, 2019;

WHEREAS, the Natural Resources Department recommends that the Tribal Council adopt the above-referenced Comprehensive Conservation Plan as the Tribes' interim management plan for the Bison Range's land, bison and natural resources; and

WHEREAS, there will necessarily need to be some allowances for differences between the Tribes and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services when interpreting/applying the Comprehensive Conservation Plan;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TRIBAL COUNCIL OF THE CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES, that the Tribes hereby adopt as an interim management plan, the Service's December 2019 Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the Bison Range's land, bison and natural resources, pending development of a new management plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that, until the Tribes develop a successor management plan, the Tribes will interpret the Comprehensive Conservation Plan with appropriate and/or necessary accommodations to acknowledge differences between the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the Tribes; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Natural Resources Department shall make the Comprehensive Conservation Plan available to the public as required by federal law.


CERTIFICATION

The foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Tribal Council on the 29 day of December, 2020, with a vote of 9 for, 0 opposed, and 0 not voting, pursuant to authority vested in it by Article VI, Section 1(a), (c), (f), and (u) of the Tribes' Constitution adopted and approved under Section 16 of the Act of June 18, 1934 (48 Stat. 984), as amended.



Chairwoman, Tribal Council

ATTEST:



Tribal Secretary