

EXHIBIT 17
DATE 3/17/2011
SB 174

Senate Bill 174
March 17, 2011
Joe Maurier
House Fish, Wildlife & Parks Committee

Mr. Chairman and committee members, I am Joe Maurier, Director of Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP). I am here in opposition of Senate Bill 174.

Members of the Committee, I won't repeat previous testimony concerning our discussion of relocating wild bison to Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) and other lands.

However, regarding the Spotted Dog Ranch in particular, it should be pointed out the previous owner of the Rock Creek Cattle Company had 800 bison on portions of the ranch between 2002 and 2004. There are still 50 bison residing on a portion of the original ranch, northwest of the highway.

We are currently engaged in an open public process, an EA and management plan regarding wild bison and this property. We urge the committee to let us proceed.