

From: [Will Meeks](#)
To: [Jeff King](#)
Subject: Fwd: joint statement
Date: Thursday, February 25, 2016 10:37:56 AM

Will Meeks
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Begin forwarded message:

From: Dan Ashe <d_m_ashe@fws.gov>
Date: February 18, 2016 at 9:10:39 PM EST
To: Vernon Finley <vernonf@cskt.org>
Cc: Brian Upton <brianu@cskt.org>, Noreen Walsh <Noreen_walsh@fws.gov>, cynthia_martinez@fws.gov, Betsy Hildebrandt <Betsy_Hildebrandt@fws.gov>, will_meeks@fws.gov
Subject: Re: joint statement

Hello Vernon and thank you for your kind note. I am very happy to hear that the CSKT Council is supportive, and we are anxious to begin working together. Our National Wildlife Refuge System Chief, Cynthia Martinez, has been meeting with the Montana delegation staff, and as you described from your visits, she is getting supportive responses.

We met today, with our DOI team, and the DOI Solicitor (Hilary Tomkins) is ready to begin work to draft legislation. Cynthia Martinez will be our point of contact on this effort and stands ready to work with Brian Upton and Hilary. I hope we can have a good draft by the end of next week, as I'm anticipating that the delegation may ask us for assistance in drafting legislation.

We also discussed convening the "Transition Team" that we agreed would be helpful. Our lead on this effort is Will Meeks (in Denver), and by copying him with this note, I'm asking him to take steps to convene this team, working with Brian Upton, and with Cynthia Martinez. As we discussed, we will need to involve BIA, and others from DOI. If you would like others to participate, from the tribal side, please let me know.

On the issue of a joint statement, we stand ready to do that. However, my communications team is suggesting that we hold off, for now, and work on a statement to issue when we have some news, like introduction

of legislation. That makes sense to me, but if you feel differently, please let me know.

Thanks again. We are proud to be working with you on this, and look forward to progress and success!

Dan.

Dan Ashe
Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

On Feb 17, 2016, at 7:34 PM, Vernon Finley <vernonf@cskt.org> wrote:

Good day Dan:

It was great meeting with you on our recent trip to DC. The news that you shared with Brian Upton and myself concerning the Bison Range couldn't have been greater appreciated by myself and the Council. I shared the meeting as well as the emails that went out to FWS staff with the rest of tribal council and they were all ecstatic as well. I also wanted to thank you for the phone call and agreement to provide a joint statement about the willingness and cooperation between the FWS and CSKT on the transfer. That statement will be useful when the time is appropriate.

Again thank you for your hospitality and we are looking forward to working with FWS staff to pull the legislation together and presented to Congress.

later,

vernon