

## Wildlife Health Protocol – Long Form Bison Body Condition Assessment 07.06.11

Consider the age of the animal, the season, and any other condition that might affect body condition (harassment by older bulls, end of rut for a mature bull, animal recovering from illness, etc.). Use these variables to consider the importance of the ranking relative to expected.

Animals in a squeeze chute are not easily assessed visually due to the pressure from the chute. Assess the animal with the squeeze released. Late term pregnancy may make ribs appear more prominent simply due to the weight of the calf. Mature bulls have a taller hump and spine, which may make spine appear more prominent simply due to natural structure.

Lighting, angle of observation, elevation of observer, body positioning of the animal, etc., may affect scoring. View the animal from several angles if possible before scoring.

1. Line from spine to pelvic point:
  - a. Rounded = good to excellent
    - i. No ribs showing, spine not prominent = excellent
    - ii. Ribs slightly showing, spine not prominent = good
  - b. Flat = fair to good
    - i. No ribs showing, spine not prominent = good
    - ii. Ribs slightly to somewhat visible, spine not prominent = fair
  - c. Concave and spine will be prominent = poor







