

Buffalo Field Campaign



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Campaign 2003

Yellowstone Celebrates Arch's 100th Anniversary...



...With the Slaughter of
231 Wild Bison Captured
inside the Park at Stephens Creek.

Upper right hand photo by Jennifer Boomer, Brooks Institute of Photography. Arch photo by Chris Rota.

Buffalo

by Lynda "Spiritdove" Imburgia

You look deeply into my eyes, into my soul with sadness
and with the deepest love
You are telling me of your suffering and of your Nation
I can feel your penetrating gaze touch my heart
I can see the tear that is about to fall from your eye
You have given everything you have to give
You are weary

The Old Way is vanishing as are your herds and the
vastness of your prairies
Your people are growing tired and your heart breaks
Nothing is as it once was
Respect for you and your people has grown less and less
You Old Ones were magnificent in your youth
You roamed free and covered the land
Your whole lives were awe-inspiring
We will never forget you

What can we do to help you survive?
How can we repay you for all you have given?
I am here... use me
I am willing... show me
I Honor You!

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The Buffalo Field Campaign is the only group working in the field every day to protect the Yellowstone bison, America's only continuously wild herd. BFC volunteers defend the bison and their habitat, and document every move made against them.



Cold Mountain, Cold Rivers is the fiscal sponsor for Buffalo Field Campaign.

CMCR is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 1990 to promote awareness and citizen involvement in environmental and human rights issues.



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The Buffalo Field Campaign

At sunrise on a late May morning, I sat on the bank of the Madison River reflecting on the lessons from another year with the buffalo. Buffalo have many gifts for those who take the time to listen. Perhaps the greatest gift is the way they treat the earth. The buffalo, in the words of my old friend Jesse Stovall, "is the fastest moving slow animal I've ever met." Buffalo constantly migrate, never staying in one place long enough to overgraze. Their pointed hoofs till the soil as they step and their droppings fertilize the soil.

Early winter brings the big old bulls out of Yellowstone and the cows and calves follow later in the winter and early spring. During mild winters only the bulls are out of the Park, their bodies perfectly honed to plow through heavy snow. Often, when buffalo stop grazing an area, other ungulates will take over the snow-cleared spots. The buffalo do the hard work, pushing the snow off the grasses, and making it possible for other animals to survive. According to Jesse, "The buffalo is the only animal that will face into a storm and feed in it."

Everyone needs to experience spring in the Yellowstone ecosystem. As the rivers and streams swell with the runoff of winter's snowmelt, life awakens in and around the Park. Grizzly and black bears emerge from their dens, birds arrive from their long southern migrations, and wolves howl for sunrise and sunset and coyotes fill in when the wolves are not around. Hawks and falcons join bald and golden eagles in the air. The sheet of ice that has obscured the waters of Hebgen Lake all winter begins to groan, crack and melt.

Sitting under an osprey nest on a spring patrol, I marveled as sandhill cranes flew overhead, filling the valley with their loud cackles. A blue heron stood still as a statue on the riverbank. Three or four dozen white pelicans, passing directly overhead, broke formation as an individual made a less than graceful, yet perfectly successful, dive for a fish. The songs of waterfowl and songbirds lulled me to sleep. Later, I was awakened by the unmistakable honking of Canadian and snow geese. Downstream I watched a moose mother teach her newborn calf to eat, while a small herd of elk took a drink of water. Cresting the sandy bluffs from the shore, I stopped to watch a herd of over 200 buffalo. Mothers grazed peacefully while their little red calves danced at their feet—all of them on National Forest land—public land belonging to all Americans, on Horse Butte. This is the only place in the world where all these species interact in the wild.

But whether they will be here for our children remains to be seen. The Gallatin National Forest is a taxpayer-funded war zone. When the cattle leave in October the battle begins, even though livestock will not return until mid June. This winter 25 bulls made their way out of the Park. Every week, like clockwork, Montana Department of Livestock (DOL) agents came out and harassed them, disturbing the entire ecosystem in the process.

This year public agencies killed 246 bison in and around Yellowstone. The National Park Service captured 231 bison in the Stephens Creek capture facility located inside Yellowstone National Park. All but one were sent directly to slaughter without brucellosis testing and the one young bull whose life was spared had a badly injured back leg. He watched, for four straight days, as every single member of his herd was shipped to slaughter. We wept for him and his herd as we watched. Montana Department of Livestock (DOL) agents transported those bison to slaughter and killed another fifteen bison from public lands near West Yellowstone, Montana.

In early May the DOL resumed its practice—after a year's hiatus—of hazing Yellowstone's wildlife by helicopter. After suffering a setback in our lawsuit to ban the helicopter, we witnessed an increase in the intensity and frequency of the DOL's helicopter use. Try to picture again the spring scene I painted in the introductory paragraphs. Now insert a deafening helicopter flying just above the treetops as it combs the forests for bison. Picture dozens of state and federal agents riding ATV's, driving 4x4 trucks, and riding horses. All species are affected by every operation. The saddest thing I witnessed was a helicopter, flying twenty feet off the ground, chasing 100 buffalo with one week old babies ten miles back into Yellowstone. These helicopter hazing operations happen every week of the spring, and provide bison calves with a hellish introduction to life. A still-born calf was found during a day of hazing this year and a newborn calf died shortly after the DOL hazed it into a barbed wire fence. Both times the agency claimed that the hazing operations had nothing to do with the deaths but anyone who witnessed the operations knew better.

During the first week of May we took the buffalo's story to Washington D.C. In three days BFC volunteers met with over 70 Senators, Representatives, and their aides. Most, to our surprise, knew very little about the Yellowstone buffalo. Matt Taylor, legislative assistant to Representative Inslee of Washington, told us that he first learned of the buffalo slaughter after receiving a single letter from a constituent in his voting district. Since then he has been actively working to educate other legislators and to find a solution to the present slaughter. Taylor's story is a perfect example of how the actions of a single individual can make a difference.

Please take the time to educate yourself on this crucial issue and write your Senators and your Representative. Your letter could be the one to instigate the change the buffalo need so badly. — *With the Buffalo, Mike Mease, Campaign Coordinator*



Buffalo Field Campaign headquarters by Hebgen Lake near West Yellowstone, Montana.

Join the "Stop-the-Slaughter" Email Update list

The best way to stay informed about Yellowstone bison is to subscribe to BFC's electronic newsletter. Each update features a "News from the Field" section, where we report on recent actions taking place with Yellowstone's wild bison. You will also find short poems, information on the natural history of bison, and the most current information on legal, legislative, and management decisions affecting bison. You'll receive an update every week from November to June (the times buffalo are out of the Park) and two per month during the quieter summer months. Your privacy is respected and we never share email addresses.

"Thank you so much for keeping everyone informed and letting us know how to help. A priceless task. These updates are incredibly informative and beautifully written — they help turn the hurt into inspiration. BFC Rocks! Best to you all, and to the buffalo."
— *Stephany Seay, Harpers Ferry, WY*

Email us at: bfc-media@wildrockies.org and we'll add you to the list. The future of the Yellowstone bison herd depends on you. Stay Informed!



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Photo by Roman Sanchez

Campaign 2002-2003 Overview

Buffalo Field Campaign is dedicated to protecting Yellowstone's bison 365 days a year. Each season brings its own unique weather, beauty and needs for the field campaign's base of operations near Hebgen Lake just outside West Yellowstone, Montana. From volunteering for woodcut weekend, pulling early morning winter patrols, to lending a hand to cook healthy meals, BFC is made possible by people like you. If you want to help create a legacy where wild buffalo roam free for future generations, please consider volunteering your time and energy with us.

Fall

Fall brings on the rut — it's bison mating time! Woodcut weekend was a success with many volunteers turning out to gather and cut a winter's supply of firewood. Thank you all for helping keep our lodges warm!

- * Three bull buffalo were captured and sent to slaughter in October marking the earliest buffalo kills witnessed by BFC. Cattle were no longer grazing in the area, having already been transported to suitable wintering grounds in Idaho.
- * Journalism students from the University of Montana visited camp and produced a Montana Public Television program highlighting our campaign to protect the buffalo.
- * Woodcut weekend for next winter is scheduled for October 4th and 5th 2003. Come and help us collect firewood to last us through Yellowstone's long, frigid winter.

Winter

Bison, led by the bulls, migrate to wintering range in lower elevations surrounding Yellowstone. Montana Dept. of Livestock and National Park Service killed 246 wild buffalo. The livestock agency killed 13 bull buffalo on the western boundary of Yellowstone while the Park Service captured 231 wild buffalo within the Park and shipped them to slaughter.

- * Lone buffalo bull was shot by the Montana DOL on the Gallatin National Forest prior to Thanksgiving Day.
- * Kids from a number of schools including a whole middle school class from Boulder, Colorado visited camp. Sojourner students witnessed capture of nine bull buffalo by livestock agents.
- * *New York Times* runs a front-page story on the slaughter of Yellowstone bison that covered BFC and included one of our photos. CNN, NBC *Nightly News*, and NPR's *All Things Considered* also reported on our campaign to protect the buffalo.
- * People from chapters of the Sierra Club, Greater Yellowstone Wildlife Alliance, and the Great Old Broads for Wilderness spent time in camp and out in the field on patrol.
- * BFC volunteers joined with Audubon for a Christmas bird count documenting an incredible diversity of bird species in the Madison Valley.
- * National Park Service rounded up 231 buffalo inside Park at Stephens Creek and shipped them all to slaughter facilities. Six buffalo shipped to slaughter escaped from the facility holding them and were shot in the field.

Wintertime in Yellowstone can be harsh but rewarding. It's a good time for visits by groups of people and student classes. Winter is an excellent time to get oriented with our daily patrols. Winter field patrols run sunup to sundown from November through May.

Spring

Female buffalo journey together to their Spring calving grounds. Hundreds of buffalo leave the park following the Madison River on their way to the Horse Butte Peninsula. Spring's rebirth is marred by the DOL's repeated hazing of pregnant bison and bison giving birth. Two newborn bison died this Spring as a direct result of being hazed by the DOL.

- * May 2nd Annual Buffalo Stampede thunders into Washington D.C. Buffalo Rally draws indigenous activists Winona LaDuke and Rosalie Little Thunder, conservationists Brock Evans, Jan Hartke and Mike Mease, and a 25-foot Buffalo. They presented letters of public support to the Dept. of Interior demanding protection of Yellowstone bison herd under Endangered Species Act.
- * BFC volunteers participated in Earth Day events around the region. Buffalo Exchange stores across the country staged an impressive outreach effort and benefit for BFC.

A Week of Action for the Buffalo is scheduled May 1st-8th 2004. Spring is a demanding time for BFC. Days are long, bison are everywhere and we're usually short of volunteers. Mass action requires a mass. Come defend the buffalo!

Summer

Bison begin migrating to their summer ranges within the Park's interior. Summer marks the beginning of BFC's major outreach and education campaign. Volunteers spend time in Yellowstone National Park and Jackson, WY educating visitors about what happens to buffalo when they are not around. We continue to host groups and supporters visiting the area, and setup a road show taking our message directly to the American people.

Thank you all for your support, prayers and contributions to stop the slaughter of the last wild bison in America. — *By Jonas Ehdin*

During a recent hazing operation on Horse Butte, DOL agents ran a herd through a barbed wire fence and paid no attention to the newborn calves who were trying to keep up with their families. A newborn baby was badly injured in a fence. Only after the calf had been weakened to the point of exhaustion did the agents finally leave she and her mother alone. BFC volunteers stayed in the area, giving the buffalo plenty of space. We noticed a big gash to one knee and wounds in the baby's side. The mother repeatedly tried to get her baby up on her feet but the baby didn't have the strength. The next day the DOL and a Forest Service agent came to chase the mother and baby back into the Park.

Four women from BFC stood between the buffalo and the agents, holding hands and joining in song. A Forest Service agent approached the women but they kept on singing and paid no attention to him. After deliberating for some time, the agents departed, leaving the mama and the calf alone. The next morning our patrol found the calf dead. The DOL came out and hazed the mother off, put the baby in a plastic garbage bag, and carried her away for testing.

Wanting to honor the calf on the ground where she spent her final days, we gathered to honor the calf and give thanks to the lessons the buffalo bring us. When we finished our ceremony the mama buffalo appeared from the trees, approached us, and grunted several times. We walked away, leaving her alone. She went to the site where her baby had died and sniffed the ground.

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Legal Updates

Bald Eagle & Helicopter Hazing Appeal

This spring U.S. District Court Judge Charles C. Lovell threw out our lawsuit to protect bald eagles, trumpeter swans and bison and other wildlife from helicopter hazing.

The federal lawsuit, filed in May 2001 by Cold Mountain, Cold Rivers Inc. The Ecology Center Inc. and Buffalo Field Campaign charged the Montana Department of Livestock, U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service with violating several federal environmental laws.

Judge Lovell dismissed our central allegations that the Montana Dept. of Livestock (DOL) illegally deployed helicopters to haze Yellowstone bison in occupied bald eagle territories on Horse Butte Peninsula, and that the federal agencies failed to properly analyze helicopter hazing and its impact on bald eagles and their habitat.

With the approval of the Forest Service and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the DOL has been operating a bison capture facility on Horse Butte since 1998.

The bald eagle is still a threatened species and trumpeter swans are a sensitive species protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Cold Mountain, Cold Rivers Inc., The Ecology Center Inc., and Buffalo Field Campaign filed an appeal to the 9th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals to overturn Judge Lovell's ruling. Stay tuned!



"The people of the state do not wish to abdicate their sovereignty to the agencies which serve them."

- Montana Code 2-3-201

Right to Know Lawsuit... Now We Know

Montanans have a Constitutional right to know what public agencies do. In early 2001 the controversy surrounding the slaughter of Yellowstone's wild bison spilled over into a legal battle for public access to DOL records.

Beginning in March 2001 members of the Buffalo Field Campaign, The Ecology Center, Inc. and Cold Mountain, Cold Rivers repeated requests to inspect the Montana Dept. of Livestock's records went unanswered.

Phone calls to the DOL to set up a time to view and copy public documents were ignored by the agency. When we finally received a reply, their attorney made the audacious claim that the livestock department had discretion to "modify" our fundamental public right to know.

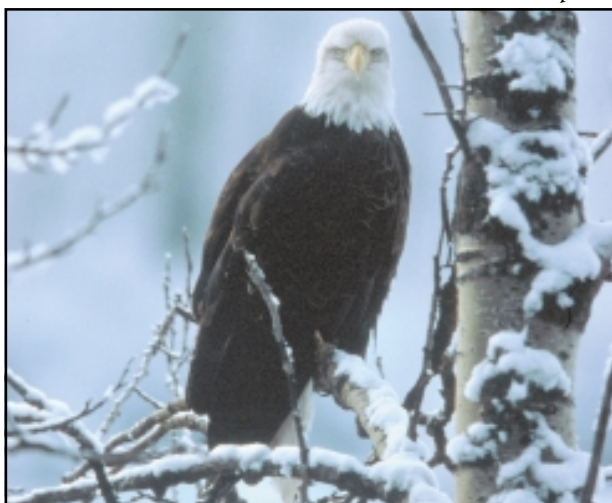
To remedy this clear unconstitutional breach of citizen rights, we enlisted Brenda Lindlief Hall an attorney at Reynolds, Motl & Sherwood — a Montana law firm well known for their public right to know litigation, and filed a complaint with Montana District Court in Helena, MT.

After a series of court hearings, rancorous testimony and appeals to Judge Thomas C. Honzel for a remedy, the Montana Dept. of Livestock finally opened up their Yellowstone bison management records to citizen examination. Thousands of records were copied and reviewed (with security personnel looking over our shoulders).

A settlement was reached in the summer of 2002, and the Judge ruled in our favor. Denying access to public records and abridging state constitutional rights demonstrates the extremes to which the Montana Dept. of Livestock will go to prevent citizens from knowing what they're up to. Hopefully, they've learned citizens will fight to safeguard cherished, fundamental rights.

— By Darrell Geist, BFC Board member

USFWS photo



Buffalo Hunting Montana Style: Again?



These two photos were taken during the buffalo hunts enacted by the Montana State Legislature in the 1980's. This hunt was later rescinded in 1991 after a national public outcry. Buffalo hunting is neither a fair chase hunt, nor is it ethical. The 2003 Montana Legislature has decided to try it again. — File photo.



Legislative Updates

APHIS Brucellosis Eradication Meeting

On April 24, 2003, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) declared at a public meeting in Jackson Hole, Wyoming its intention to create a new brucellosis elimination plan for the Greater Yellowstone Area. While the meeting was billed as an opportunity to share information and hear from the public, two hours of comments in opposition to the strategy of brucellosis elimination did little to change APHIS's course. Last year, Congress gave APHIS sweeping authority over all animals or carriers of disease that may be "detrimental" to livestock.

Montana Legislature Acts against Bison

Two bills passed by the 2003 Montana Legislature directly affect Yellowstone bison. House Resolution 15 asks the federal government to expedite the process of eliminating brucellosis in Yellowstone elk and bison, while Senate Bill 395 reinstates a bison "hunt." Both bills reflect the desires of Montana's powerful livestock lobby to keep bison out of Montana at any cost. Diverse groups representing hunting and conservation groups testified against SB 395, and not a single hunting group testified for the hunt.

Bison Stampede Rolls Through DC

The week of May 4th through the 9th brought BFC volunteers to Washington DC to expose the plight of Yellowstone bison before members of Congress to educate them on the bison issue. In the coming months, there may be action in both houses of Congress on behalf of Yellowstone bison aimed at cutting off federal funding for the hazing and killing of bison.

BFC, along with the Ecology Center, the Fund for Animals and Cold Mountain, Cold Rivers are preparing a petition to list the Yellowstone bison herd as a distinct population segment under the Endangered Species Act. Please let your senators and representative know that people in their district want to see protection for Yellowstone bison.

— By Josh Osher, BFC Legal Coordinator

"It is an irony, that in a new millennium, America is still killing buffalo. It is a new time, time to end the killing. Time to think and act for the future. The buffalo deserve it. So do we." -Winona LaDuke

Royal Teton Ranch Land Exchange all for nothing?

During the winter of 1996-97 over a thousand buffalo were slaughtered on the northern boundary area of Yellowstone, near Gardiner, MT. Much of the land that bison had migrated out of the Park onto was owned by the Church Universal Triumphant. The Royal Teton Ranch (RTR) was a large land holding that the diminishing New Age Church was willing to sell and trade. In a deal brokered by the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, and using over 13 million taxpayer dollars Congress appropriated from the Land and Water Fund, 6,770 acres were purchased, 1,012 acres were acquired through land exchange with the Forest Service, and a conservation easement was placed on 1,508 acres of the RTR. Senator Max Baucus (D-MT) was instrumental in pushing through this land deal. When outlining the details, he had this to say: "on the bison issue... we should remember this day. This is a great day for Montanans, for sportsmen across the state. And so the spirit of the joy today we assume that we're going to have the right attitude in working out these other solutions and don't get wrapped around the actual, minor details on the bison issue. But remember the spirit of today so we can get those bison issues and other related issues worked out pretty amicably" (transcript of press conference, November 11, 1998, Bozeman, Montana). Happy, happy, joy, joy. You would think the problems would be solved. Not so!

This consolidated piece of land is critical wintering grounds for many animals. Cattle grazing on the land was discontinued. Bison should have been allowed to once again use these grounds during the winter. But this year it wasn't so. Yellowstone Superintendent Suzanne Lewis decided that she would capture bison trying to leave Yellowstone and send them to slaughter. Her reason? She believed that Yellowstone needed to cowtow to the cattle industry and abandon the Park's mission of natural regulation, and ignore the intent of the land exchange just because there were more than 3,000 bison in the Park. It was an utter failure in Park management to not let the bison out of the Park to use this habitat, despite provisions in the Bison Management Plan that would have allowed it.

Let Superintendent Lewis know what you think of her decision to slaughter 231 wild bison captured within the Park at Stephens Creek. Her contact info is on the back page.



Roaming with the Last Herd of Wild Buffalo

Story and photo by Yote Risa

The Montana sky was tinged with yellow and pink. Another beautiful sunset began to illuminate snowy mountains rising to the Continental Divide. I worked my skis through the crusted snow, following the frozen Duck Creek across the valley below Fir Ridge. Up ahead, grazing by some willows along the creek, was a herd of ten bull buffalo. Lingered in the inspiration of the moment, I said a prayer and a warning for them. "I respect and honor you," I called out. "Stay wild and free. There is danger this way. Please stay away."

I returned to our camp on a narrow swath of National Forest land wedged between the western boundary of Yellowstone National Park and the Duck Creek buffalo trap. The fence was already broken in places by buffalo who were not easily deterred from their winter migrations. We kept our fire in front of one such opening, hoping to deter hungry buffalo from a trap baited with sweet-smelling hay.

More than 30 million buffalo once roamed North America. By 1903, all but 23 had been slaughtered, victims of the US war against Native Americans, manifest destiny and the westward expansion of livestock. Those few surviving buffalo took refuge in the remote Yellowstone backcountry. Their direct descendants, the only continuously wild herd of buffalo in the US, still face peril. During winter and spring, buffalo migrate out of Yellowstone to lower elevations where they seek food and give birth. In Montana, they are hazed, captured and killed by the Montana Department of Livestock (DOL) at the direction of Montana's livestock industry.

The buffalo are chased into traps where they are confined and sent to slaughter. Even those that escape or are hazed into the Park are endangered by DOL operations because they waste the energy they need to survive harsh Yellowstone winters. Such operations are very chaotic, disrupting local communities and tourist traffic as well as endangered bald eagles, sensitive trumpeter swans, elk, moose, grizzly bears, wolves and other species. Montana and federal agencies have killed more than 3,500 native buffalo since 1985. The DOL's excuse for the slaughter is brucellosis, a bovine reproductive disease that was likely first passed to buffalo from cattle. There has never been a documented case of bison transmitting brucellosis to cattle in the wild.

The DOL is supposed to test captured buffalo for the disease and release those that test negative. The test they use is extremely inaccurate. It tests for brucellosis antibodies or exposure to brucellosis, rather than the disease itself. This often means that the bison shipped to slaughter are the animals most resistant to brucellosis. Post mortem tests have confirmed that many slaughtered bison did not actually have the disease. Not that it matters much, as the last 135 bison killed during the spring of 2002 were never even tested.

Buffalo are majestic and wise creatures. Their imposing stature, large hump, thick, shaggy brown and black fur, short curved horns and penetrating eyes make them distinctive among the many spectacular large mammals of the West. It is hard not to feel blessed in their presence and humbled by their sense of community. Buffalo are reminders of what once was and messengers of a wisdom that is threatened by our current way of life. Last Spring I came out to help BFC protect the buffalo and learned about the buffalo spirit.

During April of 2002, I witnessed over 70 buffalo hazed through a barbed wire fence and captured. The sound of screeching wire, as it ripped through flesh and pulled from posts, sank in my gut. I watched helpless as the herd was corralled into the trap after being chased across the meadows and bluffs. After the buffalo were shipped to slaughter, a dozen bison emerged from the forest and paused by the trap, as if paying their last respects.

In May, as the snow melted and the days grew longer, I found myself on patrol again, outside the Duck Creek trap along the Park border. A herd of bull buffalo joined us in the sagebrush near the woods. We felt blessed to be that close to such majestic creatures. They seemed to be looking straight into our souls, weighing our purpose there with them. I felt inspired, comforted, and humbled, just a few feet from animals weighing several thousand pounds. They moved on to the private property and grazed near the trap. The buffalo do this often, taunting the DOL and then running off. On this afternoon, they were chased off by DOL agents on ATVs, but they came right back. DOL agents closed the gates to the trap and captured 29 bulls. They left the buffalo there for two nights during a snowstorm. You could hear the buffalo banging against the walls of the trap as they tried to escape into the fresh snow. They were all sent to slaughter.

Those ghosts have roamed with me as I wander. They remind me that we cannot be complacent. That day I was an observer, overwhelmed by the power of the buffalo's presence, distracted from my role as their defender. Those 29 buffalo have brought me back to Yellowstone for a full season, to honor those lost buffalo and fight to defend the survivors.



"Many native nations have prophecies that help humanity to comprehend and respect Natural Law. The Lakota prophecy tells of our relationship with the buffalo and the consequences of abandoning our obligations to them. As long as there are buffalo, we will survive. And I believe that "we" is not limited to Lakota, but encompasses humanity. Just as our ancestors must have grieved for the millions that were massacred and left to rot on the Plains in the 1800's, likewise the images of the blood in the snow of a thousand or more are still burned in our memories. Killers chuckling at the death song. And once again, the images of a seriously injured and downed buffalo being savagely beaten by men and newborn babies being shipped to slaughter will, I hope, haunt us forever." —Rosalie Little Thunder



Let the Buffalo Roam!

Special Thanks to these Foundations and Individuals:

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*"Buffalo are the only animal not allowed to leave the Park."
 —George Nell*

The Days of the Teepee

The days of the teepee are history. The days of waiting for the buffalo to come and meet us on the Great Plains are also history. Those were the days before Europeans brought their agriculture to this country. In that time we knew that the earth would provide for us in a way that did not harm the people nor the earth. The relationship between the earth and the people was holy.

The rain and the sun together brought a great awakening to the plains in the springtime. The songs of the rivers and streams grew strong as they ate the melting snow. The animals and people felt relief through the awakening of spring. During the hardest times of winter all knew that spring was coming to bring water and end the fast of winter.

And then the plains learned the word. Agriculture. Kill everything and raise something not accustomed to the environment. Try as hard as you can to overcome all odds to break the earth, the sun, the water and the wind.

Rather than copy nature's formula, we plow the whole world and allow the wind to carry the earth away. Rather than bend in the wind we build structures rigid so the water could float them away. Rather than allowing spring to awaken the earth we restructure nature's clock to market the beast.

In this struggle we find our relatives the buffalo. There once were enough buffalo to feed the world and no person would go without food, clothing, or shelter. That was the promise the buffalo made to the human being in the beginning of time, because we were not able to care for ourselves.

The formula for the buffalo is to multiply until all the need is satisfied. It is a balance of nature that is holy. Until we meet the need of hunger in our time the buffalo will continue to struggle until all are fed. They are as much a tool of measurement for the health of people as a thermometer is for the temperature of the body. Some think that within the true buffalo lies the possibility that their DNA will bring the White Calf that we all have waited to see from the beginning of time. Some think that the Native people are becoming mixed in bloodlines much like the bloodlines of the buffalo. Whatever the thought, the people are the buffalo and the buffalo are the people.

Agriculture is the molding of growth, cultivating what is wanted and removing what is not. In the beginning the Creator formed all things with purpose. We as farmers remove all things we do not understand to expose our truth in our understanding. We have decided what is good and what is bad, what we want, rather than what we need. In the beginning, all things were formed by the Creator and all things were related. By removing the buffalo we lose the chance to see our connection to the whole.

We must leave the coldness of science to the winter, and get back the husbandry and motherhood of the land and our culture. We must take care of our tomorrow; we can not create a myth of our relatives, the buffalo by destroying what is real. We need to learn the connections that will lead to peace rather than separate and destroy what we don't want to understand.

We ask that all who pray add our relatives to your prayers of peace.

Let our people go. —Ehnamani, May 12, 2003

Horse Butte

To the west of Yellowstone lies a unique piece of land that separates two arms of Hebgen Lake. This area, known as the Horse Butte Peninsula, sits in a basin surrounded by rugged mountains and Hebgen Lake. Horse Butte provides habitat to a community of species found nowhere else in the world. Its relatively low elevation provides spring habitat for the Yellowstone bison, critical lynx habitat, bald eagle nesting territory, and open water Trumpeter swan refuge as well as habitat for peregrine falcons, boreal owls, sandhill cranes, wolverines, otters, beavers, skunks, marmot, deer, elk and moose. Native westslope cutthroat trout utilize the surrounding lakes and rivers and numerous plant species not found in the surrounding alpine regions grow from the Butte's soil. Its rich habitat and proximity to the Park and neighboring wilderness areas make it a vital corridor for wildlife species such as the endangered grey wolf and grizzly bear. An incredible diversity of plant and wildlife species and habitat types thrives on the peninsula.

Horse Butte is important to the Yellowstone bison. For generations, bison have migrated to Horse Butte via a winter/spring migration corridor. The bison winter at this lower elevation and calve on the protected peninsula in the spring. When the sun has melted the deep snows, and the time is right, they return to Yellowstone using this same corridor. While this migration to the Butte is a recent phenomenon of the bison—Hebgen Lake is a reservoir—surely they would have historically migrated along the Madison River's lowland riparian zone. The Butte has become a great example of the ecological connectivity of a dynamic ecosystem that is not truly represented by man-made lines on a map.

Native American hunters, gatherers, and fishermen—like their bison relatives—have long drawn sustenance from the Butte's early green-up. Archeological explorations have found remnants of early Native American artifacts. The area is under intense pressure from a multitude of human sources including bison hazing, capture and slaughter, unregulated recreational snowmobile use, cattle grazing, and residential development.

Horse Butte Wildlands Protection Project

BFC presented its first batch of citizen's petitions requesting that wildlife be given priority over livestock on the Horse Butte Peninsula in May of 1999. After collecting and submitting almost 200,000 signatures and innumerable emails since, one of our petition's demands has been met. Cattle will no longer graze on the Butte's public lands. Thanks to all of you who signed the petition and worked so hard to make this happen! It is a victory that we should all celebrate. But the insane management practices of the Montana DOL continue, and so we continue with the Horse Butte Wildlands Protection Project (HBWPP).

Our HBWPP is a holistic approach to assessing the biological, cultural and anthropogenic components of Horse Butte. This study is utilizing existing data from archeological surveys, predicted threatened and endangered species habitat range, satellite imagery, and Geographic Information System (GIS) layers of reliable species observations on Horse Butte. We are looking at historical Forest Service range vegetation records as well as current range conditions. Our plant surveys last summer discovered two sensitive species of monkeyflower near the site of the capture facility. We are urging the Forest Service to list these plants as species of special concern on the Gallatin National Forest.

Our daily patrols document wildlife sightings and the locations and activities of wildlife are entered into our GIS database. Volunteers document ways in which the harassment of bison under the current management plan disturbs all wildlife on the Horse Butte Peninsula. The sum of all of these parts will be an encompassing view of the ecology of Horse Butte. This will provide a better understanding of the area's biological components and will help guide efforts to change human use and management regimes in this unique part of the world. Step by step, we will return public lands to their intended use as wildlife habitat, using this project as a model.

With help from the Missoula-based Ecology Center, we are developing a series of GIS maps of the Horse Butte Peninsula. The first of these maps appears below. The HBWPP's future presentations will show the importance of this area to decision-makers and the general public and support our outreach and education efforts. Please contact us if you would like to receive further information on this project.

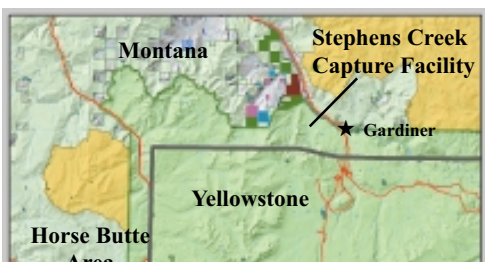
Buffalo are still not "allowed" to roam freely on the Butte and hundreds were hazed from the area this year. We are getting closer to our goal of making public lands available for public wildlife and know that our work in the field and constant pressure on the agencies involved has helped.

We Need Your Support!

Please make a stand with the buffalo at Horse Butte. Your contributions will support the Horse Butte Wildlands Protection Project and legal efforts to protect this unique area.

Horse Butte Free State
excerpt by Rain Wolf

"In the blizzards and spiraling starlight we hold roots in the road for peace and equanimity. Unite with us and hear the voice of the buffalo"



Maps by Ecology Center GIS.



Horse Butte Peninsula, surrounded by Hebgen Lake, looking west. Photo by L. Robertson. Flight provided by LightHawk.

A Spring Story from Yellowstone

With the moon still in the early morning sky and the light of the not yet risen sun, my brother Robert and I walk along the winding bluffs of the Madison River. Below us, the Madison is covered with a blanket of fog. We hike further into the belly of Yellowstone following the tracks of bison and elk, going both east and west. The ground is moist with the early morning dew. Sign of our four-legged family can be seen in all directions. An osprey flies over us and gives a few short whistles followed by a final long one. In the distance, the unmistakable call of two sandhill cranes echoes through the forest. The first rays of sun are filtered through the pine trees into an orange red haze. It's going to be a beautiful day.

We continue on for about three miles to where the Madison opens into a large field of willows, grass and a few scattered trees. There in the rising mist, herds of elk and buffalo graze peacefully. I pull out my binoculars and scan the herd and stop at a group of four mama buffalo preparing to cross over a small tributary that branches off the Madison. With the mist still coming off the water, I see what I think is a smaller than usual figure. Ten minutes pass before my suspicions are confirmed—the first baby buffalo of the season! The beautiful new life offers hope that this last wild herd will continue.



The mama stumbles awkwardly as the baby walks beneath her, attempting to suckle milk. This new life brings excitement to my brother and I and to all the other buffalo and elk that are present as well. Various adult and immature bull buffalo are playfully locking horns and wallowing in the dirt. Elk are darting around and jumping in circles, playing with each other. The sun now shining bright and the river gurgling below us, we continue to watch as the mama patiently stops and allows the newly born to nurse. The baby lays in the mid-morning sunshine and sleeps as a yearling stands over licking the new family member from head to hoof. Mama grazes nearby. We see a river otter floating down river and spot two sandhill cranes standing quietly along the bluffs. The prehistoric birds take flight and their calls again echo through the forest as they disappear into the trees. We see other mamas laying in the sun, bellies full of life. We wonder if this day will bring more hope for the continuation of this herd. Over the course of the next few hours we observe three more herds, at different intervals, coming out of the forest numbering some 180 buffalo! They come running down the bluffs, then wallow in the warm sands on the banks of the Madison. Groups of bulls lock horns and chase each other back and forth. Many walk up and stand over the new family member still laying in the grass. They walk on and another group comes by. Springtime in Yellowstone!

A mixed group of bulls stands atop the bluffs looking over; some rubbing up against trees, as if standing guard. More than anything, I enjoy the gift of being with nature during this celebration of new life. Six hours later and our patrol coming to an end, we quietly and to ourselves Give Thanks and say good-bye, for now. We walk back, with the sun reflecting on the Madison. The temptation is too great—I dive in—COLD!!! But like we love to say "a dive in a cold river will give you a new lease on life." I promise myself I'll come back to share sunset here tonight with my wife and son, Japhy and Justine.

— Story and photo by Roman Sanchez

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We apologize to anyone we may have overlooked.

What is Brucellosis?

By the Bison Ecology Project (the science arm of BFC's, CMCR's, and Ecology Center's bison research programs)

The Bison Ecology Project (BEP) has spent considerable time compiling evidence to refute the current state and federal government's management plan and tactics. BEP will continue to bring you updated information on brucellosis and bison genetics research. Here is a compilation of facts about brucellosis — the purported reason that thousands of bison have been killed in recent history:

- * Brucellosis is a disease caused by a gram negative bacteria, characterized by an undulating body temperature. It was unknown in this country before the introduction of European cattle. Although debilitating, it is rarely fatal. The Center for Disease Control doesn't consider it a major public health threat, nor requires reporting of it, and current statistics reveal a low incidence in human beings.
- * Brucellosis may be transmitted to wildlife and domestic livestock through contact with infected, aborted fetuses and birth materials. Infection may occur during breeding. Humans may contract brucellosis by contact with infected tissues, through open wounds or cuts, ingestion of unpasteurized milk, or accidental inoculation with the vaccine. Only two cases were reported in Montana in the last ten years, and they were from gutting infected elk. There are no documented cases of buffalo transmitting brucellosis to humans or livestock in Montana.

The CARD Test vs. Culture Techniques.

- * The CARD test may be used to determine if a buffalo is seropositive. This test only detects antibodies to the brucellosis organism, not the presence of the organism itself! Antibodies are formed in the host in response to exposure to a potentially infectious agent. These antibodies are made up of proteins called immunoglobulins or Ig.
- * There are three main and significant immunoglobulins. IgM and IgG primarily respond to infectious agents, and IgE usually only responds to allergic reactions. IgM antibodies are the first to form in response to contact with new infectious agents. IgM production usually continues as long as the organisms remain in the host, ceases when the organism is cleared from the body, and falls off rapidly after the onset of IgG antibody synthesis. Persistent IgM production suggests that the infectious agent is still present. IgG antibody production begins rather late in the immune response and continues at high levels well after the infectious agents have been eliminated. IgG levels eventually drop off to low levels and may persist for the host's lifetime. IgG antibodies also are formed in response to vaccinations and enable them to maintain immunity to certain infections. Maternal IgG antibodies are small enough to cross the placenta and can pass immunities on to the fetus.
- * The CARD test shows a positive result only in the presence of IgG antibodies, detecting only the animal's immune response to exposure to brucella organisms. The test is limited to this purpose! It cannot determine if infection is present. This can only be proven by culturing out the organism itself. Specimens for culture have not been obtained on all seropositive buffalo, and of those that were cultured, only a small percent actually grew out brucella organisms. What could be the reason?

What is the SLC11A1 Gene?

- * Current research has discovered that some buffalo possess a gene recently renamed SLC11A1, a resistance and susceptibility gene, which may enable them to develop an immune response to brucellosis, and allow them to clear the organism from their bodies. Brucellosis is usually transmitted during breeding. Most bison do not begin breeding until about two years of age. If they get exposed to brucellosis at that time, this gene could "switch" on and the bison could make antibodies and develop long term immunity. Research regarding the function and role of this gene in the bison immune system continues at Texas A&M University.
- * In one study of 190 bison, 119 tested seropositive. Of those 119, only 23 cultured positive. The mean age of the bison that were culture positive and seropositive was 2.34 years! The level of culture positives drops off sharply by age three. This could mean that when buffalo are exposed to brucellosis during their first breeding season, they could be developing an immune response and clearing it from their bodies. Most seropositive bison may have just developed long term immunity to brucellosis.
- * Other factors can affect the accuracy of the CARD test and culture techniques. The CARD test is only qualitative — macroscopically read as a positive or negative result. It cannot be correlated to a level of IgG antibody. The test should be run at a room temperature above 50 degrees F, in a slightly humid environment. The samples should be spun only in a properly calibrated centrifuge designed specifically for the CARD test. The CARD test should be rotated for exactly four minutes. Any further manipulation can result in gel-like substances which can be false positive. This test detects only long term immunity in the form of IgG antibodies. Yet, the DOL relies on these results alone to determine if a buffalo is slaughtered, if they test at all.

- * In Dec. 2001, USDA gave permission to MDOL to implement a new testing methodology called the Fluorescent Polarization Assay (FPA). This test was touted as more sensitive than previous methods. Although it's more sensitive for detecting IgG antibodies to brucellosis exposure, it proved less accurate for diagnosing infection. A quantitative result of 90.0 or above is considered positive. Of 156 bison tested by FPA, 127 were considered positive for brucellosis antibodies. When compared to culture results only 32 were actually culture positive with results ranging from 117.1 to 323.4. However, 95 of these FPA positive bison were culture negative with results ranging from 93.4 to 296.6. This study revealed that FPA was of little or no diagnostic value for bison. It further illustrates the need for more research of the bison immune system before we implement testing methods designed for use in cattle. Overall, only 21% of FPA positive bison were actually infected! Use of this test resulted in about 80% needlessly slaughtered. The FPA test was discontinued after the NPS and conservation groups raised issues about the new test, and Yellowstone refused to use the test without documentation of its accuracy in bison. To date neither MDOL, nor USDA have provided this.
- * Few cultures have been taken, and failure to obtain positive results usually is due to non-presence of infection, or inappropriate sampling techniques including failure to use a sufficient sample. False positives occur with cross contamination of specimens. Considering all of the variables, it's clear that there is no real evidence to support the claim that there is widespread brucellosis infection in Yellowstone buffalo.
- * A new test for diagnosis of actual brucellosis, "Real-Time Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) Assay for Brucella abortus," has been developed. Studies to confirm its accuracy and precision are being conducted. This assay uses the sensitivity of PCR to detect small bits of the organism's DNA to detect its presence. Even though culture tests remain the gold standard for diagnosis of brucellosis, this new test could offer new diagnostic information that could spare the lives of many tested bison.

What about Elk?

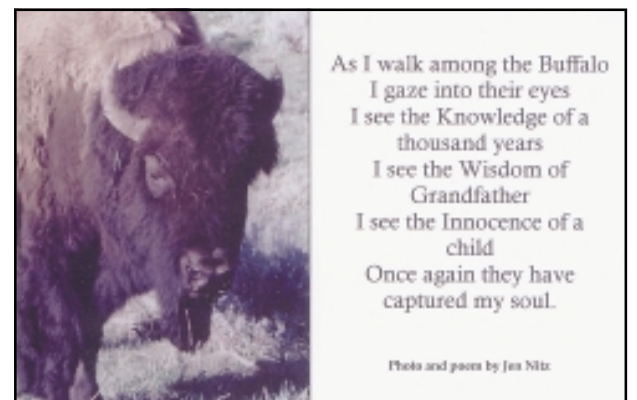
- * The same tests have shown that as many as 50% of the 120,000 elk in the Yellowstone ecosystem are seropositive for brucellosis. There is about a 12% abortion rate among native elk due to brucellosis. Yet elk are allowed to migrate freely and are more likely to co-mingle with cattle than buffalo. In fact, we have observed that buffalo will avoid most contact with cattle. We know quite well that elk have been left alone due to their popularity with hunters, and the money they generate for the state from hunting protects them from the DOL — for now.
- * When elk from Gray's River feeding ground in Wyoming tested positive for brucellosis antibodies, local authorities attributed this to "exposure" or a "bad strain of vaccine." Yet if bison test positive for antibodies the DOL considers them "infected," regardless of culture status.
- * This past year elk that migrated into Idaho from the Gray's River feeding ground in Wyoming exposed a private cattle herd to brucellosis. Several cattle from this herd tested positive for brucellosis antibodies. Culture results confirmed the transmission of an identical strain of brucellosis from the elk to the cattle. This event resulted in over 100 cattle from this herd being removed because of exposure.
- * Two vaccines have been approved for cattle, strain 19 and RB51. Neither of these vaccines have proven to be completely safe or effective in elk and bison, and no safe delivery system has been developed.

Are Elk Next?

- * Montana's Dept. of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks recently conducted a survey for brucellosis antibodies in elk that migrate from Yellowstone into the state. This study revealed a low seroprevalence which has prompted FWP to consider "trigger" points for lethal management of elk who might threaten Montana's cattle industry. How will these trigger points be determined and how will these elk be managed? Will we see elk shot as they enter the state of Montana or shipped to slaughter in stock trailers? What will the new brucellosis eradication plan bring?



Photo by Jennifer Boomer, Brooks Institute of Photography



Brucellosis and the Cattle Barons

By Dan Brister, BFC Project Coordinator

Brucellosis is not the grave threat Montana's livestock industry makes it out to be. In Grand Teton National Park, where bison and livestock have coexisted for more than fifty years, brucellosis has never appeared in cattle. North of the Park, in 1989, more than 900 bison migrated across Yellowstone's north boundary and mingled with cattle near Gardiner. Fearing brucellosis transmission, the state tested 810 cattle from eighteen herds that had shared the range with bison and found no trace of the disease.

In a 1992 study, the United States Congress' General Accounting Office concluded that Yellowstone's bison pose no threat of transmitting brucellosis to livestock. In its 1998 study, *Brucellosis in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem*, the National Academy of Sciences concluded, "The current risk of transmission from YNP bison to cattle is low."

John Mack, a National Park Service wildlife biologist, concurs: "There is no evidence of wild, free-roaming bison transmitting brucellosis to cattle. The state is saying this is a grave threat, and here you had all these bison mingle with livestock and nothing happened." Dr. Paul Nicolletti is a leader in the field of brucellosis research. In response to a question about the likelihood of transmission from Yellowstone bison to cattle he responded, "The threat doesn't seem to be there."

Brucellosis is a disease of the reproductive system. In order for buffalo to infect cattle, the cattle would have to eat or lick the placenta or birthing fluids of an infected buffalo. Bulls, non-pregnant cows, and calves—which don't shed such reproductive tissue—pose no risk of infecting cattle.

A Wyoming Game and Fish official, interviewed by *National Parks Magazine* (Dec. 1997), remarked that the issue boiled down to competition over grazing rights: "If the public gets used to the idea that bison, like elk and deer, should be free to roam on federal lands, then it may lead to a reduction in the amount of public lands forage allotted to livestock. That's what the ranchers really fear."

John Varley, Yellowstone's Director of Resources also believes the slaughter is driven by economics. In an article in *Audubon* (May, 1997) he calls the bison slaughter, "a struggle between the park and agribusiness... a struggle which the Park," he says, is "losing badly."

Montana's livestock industry perpetuates the brucellosis myth to eliminate competition from bison, native grazers that have evolved to the West's arid conditions over thousands of years. Livestock producers perpetuate another myth. They would have us believe that the West was made to raise livestock. The facts belie this assertion.

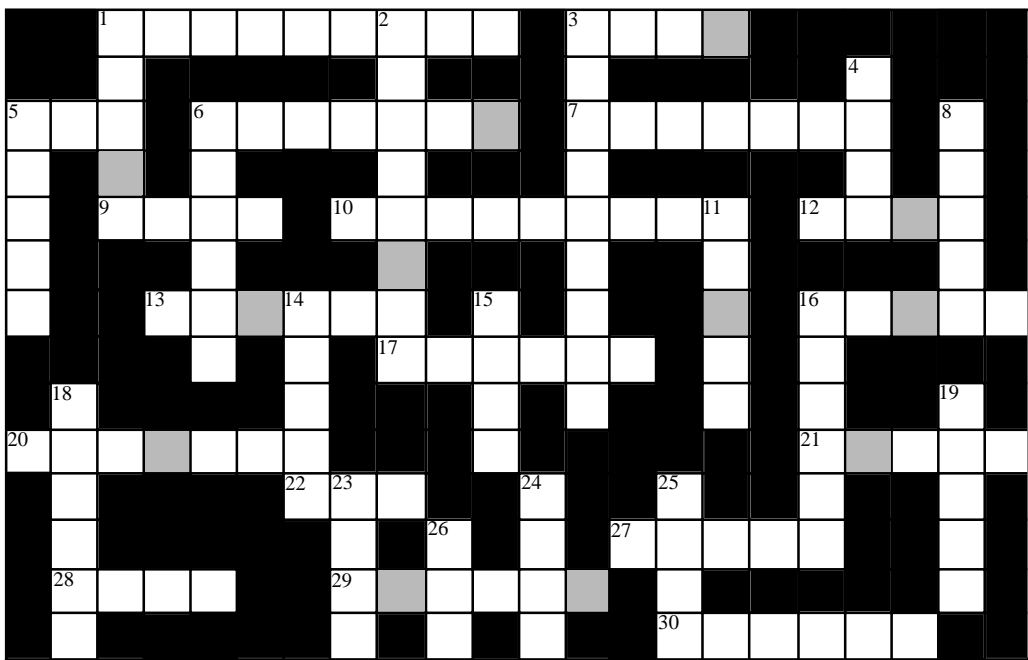
Montana contributes less than one quarter of one percent to total U.S. beef production. Private lands in Maryland produce as much beef as Montana's BLM and Forest Service lands combined. It takes 73 times the land-base to raise a cow in Montana as it does in Iowa.

Subsidized grazing permits give ranchers control of hundreds of millions of acres of federal land for the artificially low fee of about \$1.35 a month for each cow and calf. In the West this amounts to a little more than ten percent of the \$11.10 average charged on comparable private lands. Taxpayers are paying ten times as much to support the grazing program through taxes as ranchers are through grazing fees.

The livestock industry is holding Yellowstone hostage. The bison slaughter is taking place at the taxpayer's expense to benefit a handful of ranchers, and is forever altering the wild character and integrity of our public lands and wildlife.



You can put Bucks for Buffalo jars out in your community. Just check the box on the coupon on the back cover to get more information. For the Buffalo! — Jar labels by Roger Parchen, Ad-Art Imaging, Frank Consentino photo.



CROSSWORD PUZZLE

by Wazi, Bandit and Moophy

Fill in the puzzle with names of Yellowstone's native species and other random words. Unscramble the letters from grey boxes to spell the mystery word...

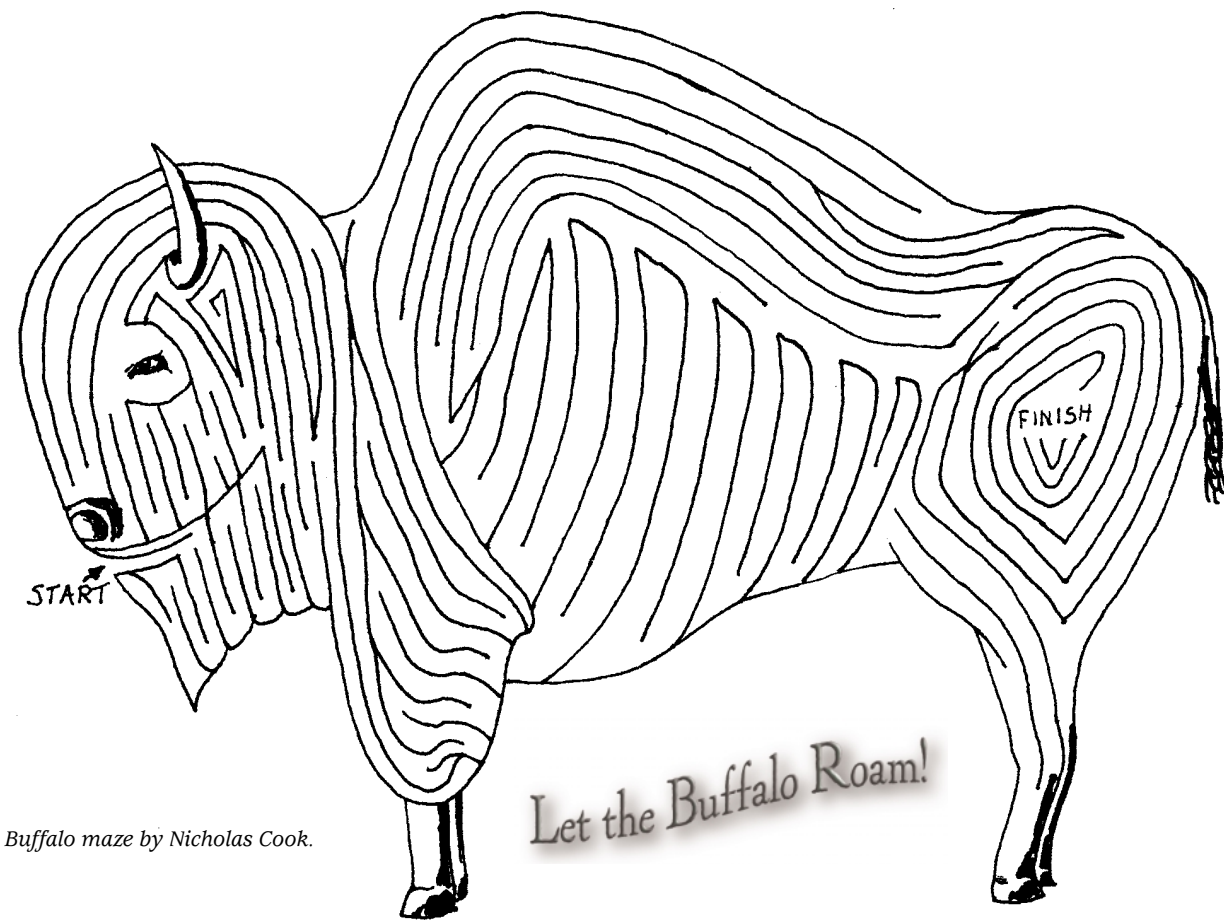
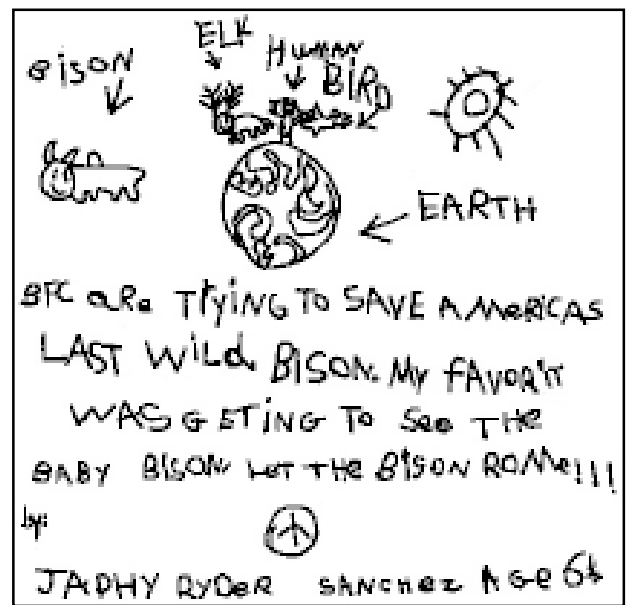
Across

- 1. Endangered national bird
- 3. Shooting _____, a native flower.
- 5. Douglas _____, a native tree
- 6. Common name for bison
- 7. Large Yellowstone predator
- 9. Trumpeter _____, sensitive bird spooked by DOL
- 10. Grizzly's smaller cousin
- 12. We use these at the cabin to chop wood
- 13. _____ Lake surrounding the Horse Butte Peninsula
- 16. Buffalo have beards on their _____
- 17. Chicken-like bird, rhymes with MOUSE
- 20. Places where water flows out of the ground
- 21. A playful, curious water mammal
- 22. Native ungulate
- 27. Sandhill _____, a large, travelling waterbird
- 28. A baby buffalo
- 29. Bird of prey that dives for fish
- 30. Native name for elk

Down

- 1. These animals can fly and lay eggs
- 2. Native fish, also name of creek near BFC cabin
- 3. Shrub native to drier regions, smells good when burned
- 4. Endangered cat, big paws, fur on eartips, rare
- 5. Huge _____ burned Yellowstone in 1988
- 6. Wood-loving animal that builds dams
- 8. Scientific name for buffalo
- 11. Large, black bird; trickster
- 14. Birds: Canada _____ (rhymes w/ PEACE)
- 15. Yellowstone's howling predator
- 16. Yellowstone's yipping predator
- 18. Blue _____, an evergreen tree
- 19. Great Blue _____, large long-necked wading bird
- 23. Mountain _____, also known as cougar
- 24. Mule _____, large-eared grass eater (herbivore)
- 25. Medium-sized black bird, related to raven (corvid)
- 26. African primate, not native to Yellowstone

For puzzle and mystery word answers, go to www.wildrockies.org/buffalo/puzzle.html



Buffalo maze by Nicholas Cook.



Japhy

Kids

Send us your artwork or poetry about wild buffalo, their home and/or friends and we'll enter you in a contest for a t-shirt and maybe print your work! Send it to: Kid's Art; POB 957; West Yellowstone, MT 59758 Be creative!

Yellowstone Buffalo Video

Online at: www.wildrockies.org/buffalo/video.html

Cold Mountain, Cold Rivers (CMCR) & BFC have teamed up to produce a compilation video that includes seven videos on Yellowstone's wild bison:

- Buffalo Hope** is a three minute introduction to the Yellowstone herd featuring beautiful footage of the bison in their native habitat. (3:00)
- Shame on Yellowstone** documents the capture and removal of 231 bison from Yellowstone by the Park Service and DOL during March of 2003. (10:00)
- Buffalo Bull** is a documentary combining video footage shot in the field over the past ten years with interviews of local residents, politicians, activists, spiritual leaders, and government officials. (50:00)
- Where the Buffalo Roam** profiles Buffalo Field Campaign's efforts to protect Yellowstone's buffalo from the Montana Department of Livestock. (8:00)
- Plan B, the Buffalo's Alternative** is a scientific, biologically-based plan to allow buffalo to roam free in the Yellowstone ecosystem. (7:00)
- Our Buffalo, Our Choice** is a pilot video on the 1996-1997 slaughter of Yellowstone's buffalo. (17:00)
- ROAM** is a children's video created by Buffalo Field Campaign volunteers. (12:00)

If you would like a copy of this video contact: Buffalo Field Campaign: Box 957 West Yellowstone MT 59758. 406-646-0070.

For info on other wildlife videos, please contact: Cold Mountain, Cold Rivers, PO Box 7941, Missoula, MT 59807. 406-728-0867. cmcr@wildrockies.org

Getting the word out is key! Schedule a showing in your community. It's easy - reserve a meeting room and put up some flyers (you can download them on our website) and invite your friends. Request some extra newsletters from us! Gather together and share what is happening to the last wild buffalo. We will change the tide of the buffalo's future, person by person - voice by voice. Together we can make a difference!



BFC Notecards

These cards are great for invites, to say thank you, for notes to friends and to support a great cause!

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Support Our Frontlines Work to Defend the Buffalo and look great in a new Buffalo Field Campaign Earth friendly Organic Cotton T-shirt!

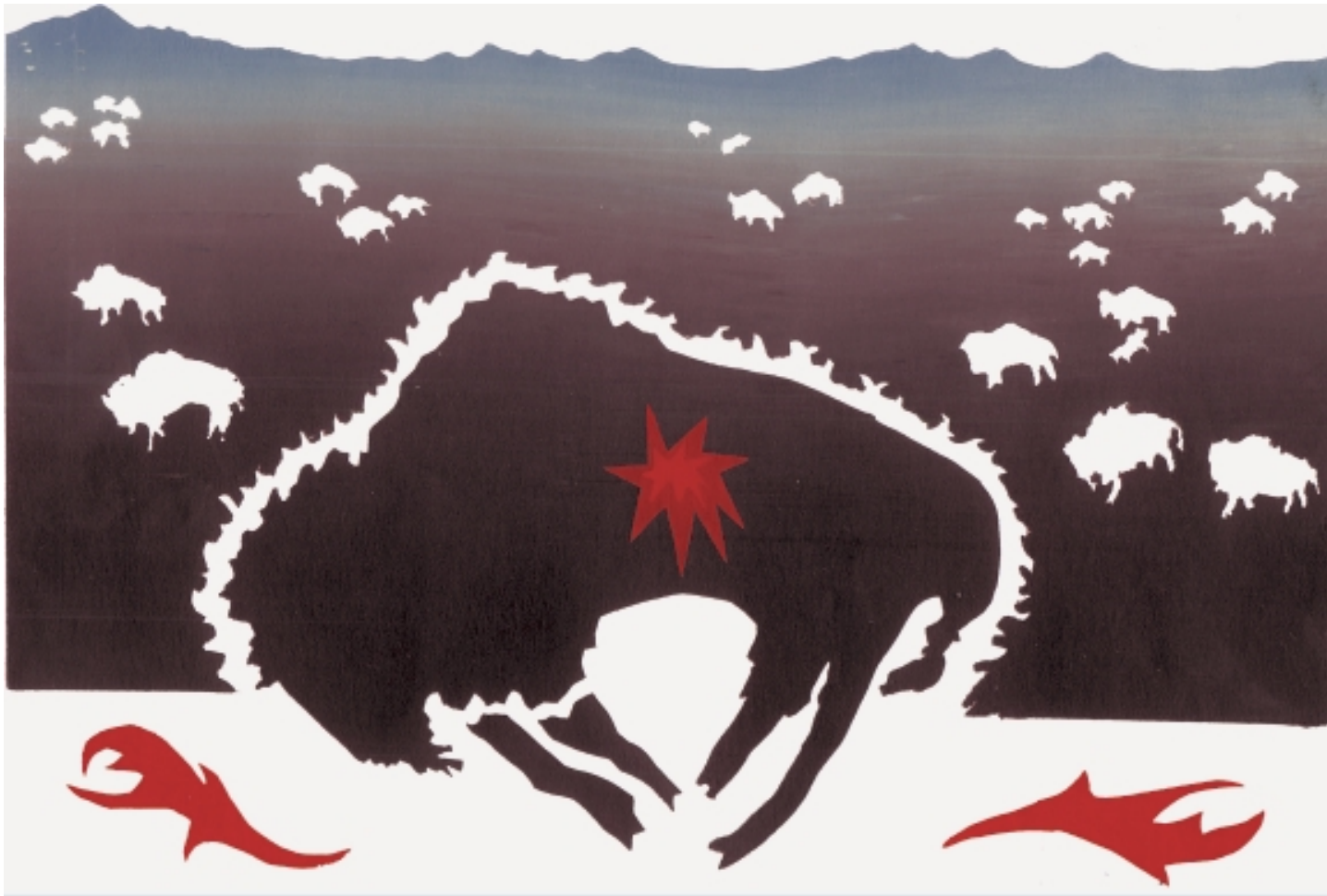


Cosmic Buffalo on the front **Buffalo Bill of Rights** on the back

4 Sizes: S, M, L, XL (XL's are BIG!) Please specify size when ordering. Color: natural

Only \$20 (includes shipping and handling)

See this design online at <http://www.wildrockies.org/buffalo/teez.html> Just send a check or money order, use the coupon, or order securely online. Check back with us later, or see the website for new designs.



The Bison Ecology Project (BEP), along with other organizations and scientists have sent a letter to the US Fish and Wildlife Service demanding that they change their management tactics and take proactive measures to list the bison as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). That letter, and the almost 200,000 petition signatures presented to them have gone unheeded. BEP and its allies soon will present an official petition to list bison as a threatened or endangered distinct population segment under the ESA. You can help by sending BFC your letter of support, which we will present to the government along with our petition. Any other assistance you can lend to this effort would be greatly appreciated, as it will be a long hard fight to win true protection for the Yellowstone bison!

Help Support the Buffalo Field Campaign!

Picture a strong and agile mountain goat crossing a high ridge. She dislodges a small rock with her hoof. As the rock tumbles down the talus slope it gains momentum, loosens other rocks, and reveals how much impact a seemingly small action can have. It will take the collective efforts of each and every one of us to give the buffalo strong and lasting protection. Some of us donate a month of our lives to stand in the field to bear witness for the herd. Others write letters, host video showings, or put on benefits. Others support our efforts with a tax-deductible contribution. Some work in drab offices far away doing research or working on outreach materials. The unromantic fact is that it costs money to maintain our patrols and share the bison's stories with the world. We need your support to reach our goals of a truly wild and free Yellowstone bison herd.

BFC is very frugal and we stretch each dollar further than you can imagine. From buying food in bulk, keeping our patrols strong and healthy, and sleeping on the floor of a supporter in DC after a hard day on Capitol Hill, we *are* a grassroots campaign. In this day and age it is rare to see a group getting so much done with so little. We have no high paid staff or fancy offices; just strong passion for the earth and its creatures.

Our grassroots community grows stronger and the voice of justice speaks louder with each new supporter. I'd be happy to provide you with any information that will help with your giving decisions and offer my assistance should you choose to plan a benefit or start a bison support group in your community. (I'll even design and supply the invitations, posters, etc). To all of you who have faithfully supported us for so long or are just getting involved, we wouldn't be here without you! We are blessed to have met so many fine folks through our work together for the buffalo. I look forward to a day when the buffalo are truly protected and we can all celebrate victory and share stories around a campfire. Until then we will keep up the good struggle. Please support our work with a contribution.

With awe and respect
For all that's wild,
Su Gregerson
Program Development Coordinator
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Contributions to BFC are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law and support our aggressive, front lines, grassroots volunteer work. We put the wild buffalo first! BFC is the only group working 365 days a year in the Yellowstone ecosystem to protect the last wild, free-roaming buffalo.

What You can do to Help Save the Last Wild Buffalo

In communities around the world, people rally to support the last wild buffalo by organizing marches, public video presentations, letter writing campaigns, drum circles, concerts and other forms of outreach. On May 9, 2003 in Washington, D.C., supporters dressed in buffalo costumes led a "stampede" from the Capitol to the Department of the Interior. Buffalo Exchange stores from Philadelphia to California helped bring attention to the buffalo and support to BFC through their Earth Day Benefit for the Buffalo. Citizens in communities across the country held vigils, organized protests, and petitioned public officials to end the slaughter.

These are just a few examples of how your community can help save the buffalo. Contact us to receive a packet with suggestions for starting a Buffalo Support Group in your community. Be active, speak out, refute the lies, have fun, and do your part!

MAIL- FAX-PHONE-EMAIL: The most effective way to let public officials know how you feel is to send letters, faxes, phone calls then emails, in that order.

Several supporters in a Congressional district can organize a visit to either a district office of a member of Congress or to their Washington, DC office. Call the Member's office to schedule a meeting.

To find out who your Representative is:
<http://www.house.gov/writerep/>

To find out who your Senators are:
<http://www.senate.gov/senators/index.cfm>

For tips and samples on writing to members of Congress, see these web sites:
<http://congress.org/>
<http://www.cfsi.org/writingcongress.html>

Join us on the Front Lines!

We are on patrol all day, everyday, defending the buffalo on their critical habitat outside Yellowstone National Park and documenting every action taken against them. We have immediate openings for field volunteers, particularly in the early spring.

All volunteers are provided room and board in a log house by Hebgen Lake, NW of West Yellowstone, Montana.

Please contact us for volunteer info:
email: buffalo@wildrockies.org
406-646-0070

Speak Out for the Buffalo!

Use your pen, phone, and computer to urge our public officials to stop the slaughter and implement common sense solutions to the problem. Letters to the editor of your local paper are a great way to let people know about this atrocity. Check out our website for more info and speak out for the buffalo! It just takes a moment and does make a difference!

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We Need Your Support to Protect the Last Free Roaming Buffalo!

Please make a tax deductible donation to the Buffalo Field Campaign

Your donation feeds, clothes, equips and houses volunteers, supports our public education and outreach efforts, and helps us protect Yellowstone's native wild buffalo! \$38 supports one activist in the field for one week.

Thank you!

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

email _____

Send a newsletter to:

I can help defend the buffalo

with my contribution:

\$380__ \$250__ \$100__ \$50__ \$38__

Other _____ All the cash (& lint) in my pocket _____

Also:

Send me ___ Notecards @ \$15/package of 10

Send me ___ T-shirts @ \$20 Sizes:

Please send contributions and requests to:
Buffalo Field Campaign; PO Box 957, West Yellowstone, MT. 59758

Yes! I'd like to help support the Buffalo Field Campaign

- Please send a tax deductible receipt
- I commit to support the buffalo again next year, also - send me a reminder
- Put me on your confidential email list
- I'd like to host a benefit/video showing for the buffalo
- Tell me about Bucks for Buffalo Jars!
- Let me know about stock gifts or bequests (confidential)
- Send _____ copies of this newsletter for me to redistribute
- Contact me re: gear/food/car/in-kind donations
- I'll be a part of the International Buffalo Network!