



BUFFALO FIELD CAMPAIGN

November 15, 2016

Dear Chairman Archambault and the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe,

We are writing to express Buffalo Field Campaign's solidarity with you and the other water protectors against the Dakota Access Pipeline.

Buffalo Field Campaign is a Montana-based wild buffalo advocacy group, working to defend the country's last wild, migratory buffalo, the Yellowstone herds. We formed in April of 1997 in response to the state of Montana and Yellowstone National Park killing over 1,080 buffalo during the bitter winter of 1996-1997. These buffalo were gunned down and slaughtered simply for migrating into Montana, where livestock interests have zero tolerance for these indigenous relatives. We were co-founded by videographer and activist Mike Mease and the late Rosalie Little Thunder (Kicikute Cokanun Win), elder from the Little Thunder Tiospaye, Burnt Thigh Band, Sicangu Lakota Oyate. Historic reports tell us that in 1883 some of the last known buffalo of the northern herds were killed along the Cannonball River at Standing Rock. By 1902, in what would become Yellowstone National Park, twenty-three buffalo had saved themselves by seeking shelter in the remote Pelican Valley — it is the descendants of these strong survivors — the last to continuously occupy their native habitat — who we stand with today.

Buffalo Field Campaign stands in solidarity with Standing Rock and all water protectors against the Dakota Access Pipeline and for clean water. We know in the depths of our hearts and the clarity of our minds that the same forces threaten our waters and the buffalo. The dominant, life-destroying culture must be stopped. In building and strengthening our culture of resistance, we understand that we must decolonize our hearts and minds and remember good ways to live in relationship and reciprocity with our Mother Earth. The buffalo are teaching us to be better humans, and we must do everything in our power to ensure their survival.

Buffalo Field Campaign's mission is to stop the harassment and slaughter of Yellowstone's wild buffalo herds, protect the natural habitat of wild, free-roaming buffalo and other native wildlife, and to work with all people — especially Indigenous Nations — to honor and protect the sacredness of wild buffalo. Our ultimate goal is to help the buffalo restore themselves to their native habitat in Montana and across the country, through natural migration on their own terms, so that they may re-enter meaningful relationship with the land, prairie, and grassland communities, and all of her people. We have had over 5,000 volunteers join us from all over the world to stand with the buffalo. We run daily field patrols, monitoring the buffalo's migration and documenting all actions made against them by government agencies. We defend the buffalo on the ground they choose to be on, in the courts, in the policy arena, and in every aspect of our lives.

"Protecting the Last Wild Bison"

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Members of our Board of Directors, staff, and volunteers have joined Standing Rock on the front lines this year, some are still there, and more of us will be coming to stand with you. Some of our friends have been arrested with other water protectors. At our board meeting in October, we discussed our commitment to Standing Rock and we are seeking different ways to lend our support. We have offered BFC's West Yellowstone-based headquarters as a resting place for travelers to and from Standing Rock, so they may have a warm place to stay, find nourishment, share stories and ideas with like-minded people, and learn about the last wild buffalo.

Our organization and individuals from our organization have been active in sharing information and ways to take action for Standing Rock through social media networks. During our 2016 West Coast Road Show, our co-founder, Mike Mease, spoke in support of the Standing Rock water protectors during his events, reaching thousands of people along the way. We have encouraged all of our supporters to join you at the Sacred Stone and Red Warrior camps and we have written and shared with our supporters about the relationship between the buffalo, the water, and the land, and the critical need to defend this sacred life, of all our relations. Our media coordinator sent her tipi to Standing Rock to assist with winter housing; a tipi that had sheltered her and others for ten years on the front lines with the buffalo. Individuals within our organization have contributed financially to the Sacred Stone and Red Warrior Camps, as well as to the legal assistance fund.

Even with all of this, which, in the stark reality of the situation feels minor, we appeal to you to let us know what else we can do.

In Solidarity,

Michael S. Mease
President and Cofounder
Buffalo Field Campaign

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