

Buffalo Field Campaign

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www.BuffaloFieldCampaign.org

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Buffalo Field Campaign is the only group working 365 days a year to protect the only continuously wild, free roaming, and genetically intact population of wild buffalo in the United States. Buffalo Field Campaign volunteers defend the buffalo and their native habitat, and document every move made against them.

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Photo courtesy of Tom Mangelsen

Buffalo Field Campaign



Masthead photo by Lloyd Alexander

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The Last Wild Buffalo

Thirty million wild bison once inhabited North America. After the 19th century slaughter only twenty-three individuals remained. Their descendants comprise America's only continuously wild population of bison and currently number approximately four thousand. Yellowstone is the only place in the U.S. where wild bison have always existed. Uncontaminated with cattle genes and unconfined by fences, these bison are both genetically and behaviorally unique. They are essential to the native grasslands, sagebrush steppes, and prairie ecosystems considered to be some of the most endangered habitats in the world.

Wild Buffalo, *continued inside*



Photo by Stephany Seay, BFC

Take Action Your voice will make a difference!

Urge Montana's Governor to Champion America's Last Wild Buffalo

The future of the last wild migratory buffalo in the U.S. depends on Montana. Contact Governor Steve Bullock and insist he take action to welcome, restore, respect, and value America's native, wild, migratory bison, and to end the Department of Livestock's authority over wild bison by abolishing state law MCA 81-2-120. Call (406) 444-3111 or email governor@mt.gov.

Designate a National Monument for Buffalo

National Forest lands adjoining Yellowstone provide critical habitat for the last wild buffalo. Help preserve wildlife habitat for migratory species by urging President Obama to protect these National Forest lands under the Antiquities Act as a National Monument. Call (202) 456-1111 or (202) 456-1414, or email at: www.whitehouse.gov/contact/submit-questions-and-comments.

Boycott Montana Beef!

Montana's livestock industry is responsible for the slaughter and harassment of wild bison. If you live in or visit Montana or Yellowstone National Park, don't eat Montana beef and let businesses know why you refuse to support the industry behind the wild buffalo slaughter.

Get Involved & Volunteer!

Contact BFC to learn about volunteering on the front lines, hosting video showings, distributing newsletters, and other ways you can spread the word to save the herds! Call (406) 646-0070 or email buffalo@wildrockies.org.

www.facebook.com/buffalowild
 www.youtube.com/user/bfcmedia

*"At Yellowstone National Park the migratory herds of bison, elk and other wildlife all need more space, which can be best obtained by designating the forest lands to the west as a national monument."
~ Bruce Babbitt,
Former U.S. Secretary of the Interior*



Photo by Stephany Seay, BFC

BFC volunteers stand with the buffalo every day documenting agency harassment.

Stay Engaged & Active!

Visit www.BuffaloFieldCampaign.org for our complete Take Action page and to sign up for Updates from the Field.

Support BFC!

Individuals like you contribute more than 65% of BFC's frugal budget. All donations are tax deductible. Make a secure online contribution at BuffaloFieldCampaign.org or use the enclosed envelope to donate by mail.

Governor's Order Benefits Buffalo in a Difficult Year

This spring we had cause to celebrate for the buffalo after a heartbreaking winter. At the end of May, during the height of hazing, Montana Governor Steve Bullock ordered the Montana Department of Livestock (DOL) not to enter private property against landowners' wishes.

This victory for the buffalo and the human residents who share their habitat was quickly sidestepped by the DOL. Standing just outside property boundaries, agents frightened buffalo with loud noises, forcing them

from these lands without technically trespassing. While this tactic effectively undermined the Governor's order on smaller lots, the buffalo found peace on larger properties. For the first time in Buffalo Field Campaign's (BFC) seventeen-year history we experienced what some buffalo along the western boundary would do if left alone.

For years the spring months have been horrible for wild buffalo as they are frightened from their chosen lands and abusively chased and harassed during calving season—all at

a tremendous ecological and financial cost. Newborn calves and their family groups are hounded from their first breath by an aggressive array of government agents riding horses, ATVs, and helicopters, who violently force them from the lands they need and where they have chosen to be.

Every year BFC monitors, documents, and works to stop the abuse. Every year we see calves injured as they are forced to flee or are separated from their mothers in the chaos of hazing. This spring, even with the Governor's order, was no exception.

The agency hazing followed months of hunting, capture, and slaughter. More than 650 wild buffalo were killed, including 258 captured by the Park Service inside Yellowstone National Park and shipped to slaughter, 322 shot by state and treaty hunters during a combined six-month season that ends only one month before calving season, 60 sent to a USDA

Governor's Order, *continued inside*



A Department of Livestock agent uses a rope to hit both moms and calves as he chases buffalo from National Forest lands where cattle never graze.



Photos by Stephany Seay, BFC



Buffalo or Bison?

BOTH! Buffalo is the popular name for North American Bison, whose scientific name is *Bison bison*. So, both names are correct and in common usage, and you'll see both throughout this newsletter.

Wild Buffalo, continued from front page

While this may sound like a conservation success story, the buffalo's future is far from certain. Since 1997, government agents have killed more than five thousand buffalo. Thousands more have been aggressively "hazed" from their habitat. The government justifies these actions under the pretense that wild buffalo could pass the livestock disease brucellosis to cattle, something that has never happened. Many species, including elk, have brucellosis, yet only buffalo are targeted. There are far more elk than buffalo, and elk have transmitted brucellosis to cattle. Yet elk are allowed to migrate freely while buffalo are killed, captured, or hazed for trying to do the same.

Buffalo Field Campaign's patrols monitor and document bison migrations and defend the buffalo's freedom to roam. Patrols inform and inspire a range of efforts designed to protect buffalo and their habitat. We share information and documentation gathered on patrols with our network of supporters, who contact decision makers, take grassroots actions, and contribute the funds that fuel our work. 📍



Photo courtesy of Deby Dixon

After a season of watching Yellowstone National Park trap and send buffalo to slaughter, BFC volunteer Comfrey Jacobs took action to shut down the trap.

Photo by Ric Kessler



Governor's Order, continued from front page

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service research facility for population control experiments, 7 struck by vehicles on the highway, and 3 shot by poachers inside Yellowstone. In a particularly difficult turn of events, the Salish and Kootenai Tribes and the InterTribal Buffalo Council signed slaughter agreements with Yellowstone National Park, helping to justify the unjustifiable by transporting hundreds of free-born buffalo to slaughterhouses where all were killed. This is the first time the tribes have taken such an active and aggressive role in the slaughter.



Photo by Stephany Seay, BFC

The last wild buffalo are shipped to slaughter by the truckload at dawn.

Despite these hardships BFC continued to make progress for the buffalo. A Montana Supreme Court ruling upheld the bison's access to habitat in the Gardiner Basin near Yellowstone's northern boundary. For the first time in at least a century, buffalo that survived the winter were left in peace until May 1 without being harassed or killed.

While similar tolerance has yet to reach the western boundary, the Governor's order created de facto tolerance zones on buffalo-friendly private lands, especially on larger tracts like the 800-acre Galanis property, whose owners value the buffalo's presence. In June, sixty buffalo and twenty-one calves found sanctuary on this property.

Newborns had time to grow strong on their new legs, nursing, playing, and soaking up sun. After a few weeks the group headed east along the Madison River at their own pace, making their way to summer habitat in the park. No shouting cowboys, no helicopters, no ATVs, no SUVs, no taxpayer-funded madness—just buffalo being buffalo—migrating according to instinct, showing us the way it should be.

Hopeful that the Governor's order is a sign of things to come, Buffalo Field Campaign will continue to work for the buffalo's freedom to roam for as long as it takes. 📍

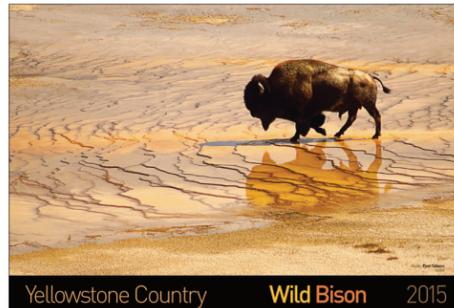
The strength and determination of the buffalo moms and calves show us the way.



Photo by Stephany Seay, BFC

In DC: Working for the Buffalo on Capitol Hill

Buffalo Field Campaign's continued presence in Washington, D.C. as an advocate for wild and free roaming buffalo has been instrumental in changing management direction for the National Park Service. In meetings with members of Congress and the Obama administration, we have consistently forwarded the position that the current management plan is outdated and not based on sound science or local pro-buffalo sentiment. As a result of our advocacy, Congress included language in the 2014 Interior Appropriations Act directing the Park Service to consult with American Indian tribes in the development of a new conservation and management plan for wild buffalo. We are continuing to work with members of Congress to ensure that common sense, the best available science, and respect for wild buffalo will guide this new planning process rather than the propaganda and politics that drive the current management plan. BFC is also leading a push to increase protection for wild buffalo and other native wildlife on National Forest lands adjacent to Yellowstone Park through the creation of a new National Monument. Please reach out to your members of Congress and ask them to support this important effort as well as other legislation on behalf of wild buffalo. 📍



Yellowstone Country Wild Bison 2015

Connect with the buffalo and support BFC! Our 2015 calendar combines superb photos, art, fun facts, and poems to convey the spirit of wild bison. Other items include the book *In the Presence of Buffalo* by BFC director Dan Brister, t-shirts, stickers, and a DVD. Visit www.BuffaloFieldCampaign.org/merch.html

Buffalo Field Campaign Wouldn't Exist Without You

Buffalo Field Campaign works in the field and on the policy front year-round to stop the slaughter and harassment of native bison. BFC is the leading source of news, information, and activism on wild buffalo and the dangers of the current government plan. Donations keep our patrols in the field and the pressure on the government to abandon the failed Interagency Bison Management Plan in favor of a vision that recognizes and protects the United States' only continuously wild population of bison. BFC relies on our grassroots network of supporters to take action for the buffalo and contribute to our work. **Please use the enclosed envelope or visit BFC's website to make a tax-deductible contribution or merchandise purchase. We cannot help the buffalo without you. Thank you!** 📍

Defending Wild Buffalo in the Courts

Buffalo Field Campaign (BFC) continues to advance our strategy of securing legal protection for buffalo as a native wildlife species and for critical habitats that the migratory species can freely roam. Many thanks to our supporters, pro bono attorneys, partner groups, and the law firms who make this critical work possible. Thank you!

📍 In January 2013, a favorable ruling by Montana District Court Judge E. Wayne Phillips protected additional habitat for wild buffalo to roam the Gardiner basin, providing critical winter range and spring calving grounds. Park County appealed his decision to the Montana Supreme Court. In 2014, Montana's highest court dismissed Park County's appeal and buffalo will be allowed to reconnect with habitat long denied to this native species.

📍 With BFC photos and video footage, the Alliance for the Wild Rockies secured a temporary court injunction in the spring of 2012 thwarting the Montana Department of Livestock from using a helicopter to harass buffalo in threatened grizzly bear habitat. In the spring of 2013, U.S. District Court Judge Charles C. Lovell dismissed the injunction and all Endangered Species Act claims to stop helicopter hazing of buffalo in grizzly bear habitat. Lovell's decision was appealed and the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals will make a final decision.

📍 BFC teamed up with Western Watersheds Project to review the best available science and develop an Endangered Species Act petition to protect America's last wild bison and the ecosystem upon which they depend. We will file a petition to save our national icon—the bison.

📍 BFC appealed the Gallatin National Forest's decision to renew a permit to continue grazing cattle on the South Fork and Watkins Creek allotments where migratory buffalo are forbidden to roam. Forest Supervisor Mary Farnsworth, the Appeals Deciding Officer, agreed with BFC and ruled that the District Ranger must consult with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service on grizzly bears prior to permitting cattle on the forest. Stay tuned!