Urge Montana’s Governor to Continue to Champion Wild Buffalo

Contact Montana Governor Steve Bullock to thank him for granting year-round habitat to buffalo in the Hebgen Basin, and to urge him to continue his support of wild buffalo by revoking the Department of Livestock’s authority over them and abolishing state law MCA 81-2-120. Call (406) 444-5111 or email governor@mt.gov.

Tell Montana to Implement Safe Passage Infrastructure

The stretch of highway west of Yellowstone is a dangerous stretch, claiming the lives of more than one hundred buffalo since 2005. These highway mortalities not only threaten the viability of America’s last wild bison population but also the lives of motorists. Urge Montana Department of Transportation Director Mike Tooley and Governor Steve Bullock to earmark highway funding to implement wildlife safe passage infrastructure on US Highway 191/287 in the Hebgen Basin, west of Yellowstone. Contact Mike Tooley at (406) 444-6201 or mtooley@mt.gov, and Gov. Bullock at (406) 444-3111 or governor@mt.gov.

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 buffalowildrockies.org.

Support BFC!

Individuals like you contribute the majority 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.

Stay Active & Engaged!

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

Gaining Ground for Wild Buffalo

As Buffalo Field Campaign enters our twentieth year, we are gaining important ground for the buffalo. Our presence in the field and at every level of the policy arena, bolstered by the actions of our grassroots network of supporters, is changing the minds of decision makers. We have given Montana Governor Steve Bullock, and everyone who cares about wild buffalo, a direct view into the senselessness and cruelty of current buffalo management.

Since Buffalo Field Campaign (BFC) was founded in April 1997, we have documented thousands of buffalo, including pregnant mothers and newborns, being hazed, or forcibly chased, from their calving grounds on Horse Butte Peninsula. Hounded with helicopters, ATVs, horses, and trucks for up to fifteen miles, this abuse became routine government practice. But thanks to the tireless work of BFC on the ground and a recent decision by Governor Steve Bullock permitting some year-round habitat for buffalo in the Hebgen Basin, these horrors may be a thing of the past!

The spring of 2016 is the first time buffalo have been left in peace on Horse Butte, a favored habitat comprised largely of National Forest and private villages where locals welcome the migratory giants. The Montana Department of Livestock (DOL), the agency in charge of harassing buffalo in Montana, is having a difficult time accepting the Governor’s order to leave the buffalo alone. DOL agents continue to scour the landscape, wasting taxpayer money looking for buffalo to harass.

One of BFC’s primary goals is to get the DOL out of all buffalo management and back to managing livestock—a common sense idea Montana’s legislators have yet to grasp, but one day will.

Our community outreach with area residents has empowered locals to be involved and create change. With the support of area residents, in 2014 Governor Bullock ordered the DOL to stop entering private property without landowner permission to haze the buffalo. Our free “Buffalo Safe Zone” signs create more habitat in Gaining Ground, continued inside

Congress named the bison America’s National Mammal in 2016. There is no species more deserving of the honor. Bison once migrated freely from coast to coast and numbered in the tens of millions. Nineteenth century hunters nearly wiped the species out by 1902, when only twenty-three wild bison remained. Their descendants survive to this day and comprise the only genetically intact, migratory population in America to have continuously occupied their native habitat. Unfenced and uncontaminated with cattle genes, Yellowstone bison are essential to their habitat, restoring the lands on which they roam.

Unfortunately, National Mammal status did not bring protection to the iconic species. In fact, the designation made clear that it not “be construed or used as reason to alter...any plan, policy, management decision, National Mammal, continued inside
IBMP 2.0: Manage Wild Buffalo Like Wild Elk

Buffalo Field Campaign is requesting that Montana and Yellowstone National Park evaluate managing wild buffalo like wild elk on public lands in the state as an alternative in the next iteration of the Interagency Bison Management Plan. The current, but outdated and unscientific plan, in place since 2000, is designed to benefit cattle, not wild buffalo.

BFC’s alternative would ensure wild buffalo are allowed to inhabit public lands and establish a population in Montana. It is long past time for the state of Montana and Yellowstone to transition away from their destructive, heavy handed plan subsidized by American taxpayers to a sustainable and respectful plan for wild buffalo that is aligned with local sentiment and nationally-held public values.

BFC’s alternative brings together the best available science that shows the wild species should be listed. Of particular concern is the decimation of the Central Interior herd of wild buffalo, whose numbers have dramatically declined to levels not seen since the 1970s.

The primary threat to buffalo is the Interagency Bison Management Plan. Under the cover of this lobbyist-written plan, Yellowstone National Park has destroyed over four thousand wild buffalo in on-going capture for slaughter operations and plans to remove wild buffalo for quarantine including for commercial purposes over the next fifty years. Every year, Tribal and state hunters take hundreds more buffalo from the public’s National Forests. To make matters worse, state laws in Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming put agriculture and livestock boards in charge of buffalo migrating beyond Yellowstone National Park.

The next step is to challenge and overturn the USFWS’s decision in court. Thanks to the non-profit Friends of Animals Wildlife Law Program who are lending a helping legal hand as we move forward in this long-term fight to secure a future for this unique and distinct wild buffalo herd.

If wild buffalo are to recover, science—backed by law—must prevail over the livestock-controlled politics responsible for the regulatory schemes that jeopardize the buffalo’s future.

Buffalo Field Campaign works in the field and on the policy front to stop the slaughter and harassment of native bison. Donations keep our patrols on the field and the pressure on the government to abandon the failed Interagency Bison Management Plan (IBMP) and to engage in 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 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!