



BUFFALO
FIELD CAMPAIGN

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West Yellowstone, MT Happy National Bison Day! Five days before National Bison Day, on October 28th, the Interagency Bison Management Plan (IBMP)--the management authority for America's longest continually wild bison herd--appears to be celebrating the ongoing slaughter of wild Buffalo through its capture-for-slaughter program removing bison from the ecosystem in numbers up to nearly 1400 bison.

"This feels like 'Groundhogs Day,' the same old tired story of a severely broken Buffalo Management Plan once again removing a 5th of the herd," says Dallas Gudgell, Buffalo Field Campaign (BFC) Board Vice President. "It's so unnecessary. If these wild Buffalo were managed as they should be, as wildlife, they would have free-roaming access to their historic habitat outside the Park, same as elk and deer." Buffalo are the nation's National Mammal. Yet, they may not roam free as the wildlife species they are.

Buffalo Field Campaign strongly supports Buffalo migration patterns being fully restored both inside and outside the Park. The wild Buffalo of Yellowstone Park should be managed as a public trust for public good. Proper management should aim for abundance not an annual cull, because the animal is not allowed to leave the arbitrary boundaries of the Park. Wild migratory animals do not recognize lines on a map. The state and federal agencies involved should not single out special management practices for a single species simply because that is the strong desire of a corporate special interest group of the Montana livestock industry.

"Protecting the Last Wild Bison"

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“The management of these wild Buffalo has been captured by the livestock industry since the IBMP inception in 2000,” said Mike Mease, BFC Campaign Coordinator. The IBMP was approved in 2000. Nine years later, seemingly as an afterthought, three Tribal entities were added in 2009. However, that did not wrest control of the IBPM from the livestock industry. BFC was in attendance at the October 28th meeting.

BFC was founded under the direction of Tribal leaders and recognizes Buffalo not only as the national mammal, but also as a sacred relative (as do native people) and supports Tribal Treaty purposes. “If the management plan treated and managed Buffalo as wildlife and sought the direction of more tribal leadership in planning, there would be abundance,” says James Holt, BFC Board member. “Abundance cannot happen if the Buffalo don’t have safe access to their historic habitat outside the Park and the management plan culls a 5th of the herd each year.”

BFC supports Buffalo repatriation on tribal lands under tribal management. The repatriation and the return of Tribal aboriginal food source and Buffalo Lifeways strengthen Tribal communities. The wild Yellowstone Buffalo are a striking symbol of the age-old relationship of Indigenous people and Buffalo. The nation’s Buffalo deserve better. Do Better.

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