

An Alternative to Manage Wild Buffalo like Wild Elk in Montana

Manage wild buffalo like wild elk in Montana using the best available science taking all changed circumstances into account.

Common to All Action Alternatives

- Use the best available science.
- Wild buffalo have a right to inhabit public lands.
- Eliminate “zone-management,” “bison-tolerant zones,” “tolerance thresholds,” and “defined management areas.”
- Designate public lands as “free to roam” for wild buffalo.
- Manage habitats and wild buffalo for long term viability and diversity.

The purpose and need for A Manage Wild Buffalo like Wild Elk in Montana alternative is to evaluate and manage for:

- natural recovery of free and wild buffalo in their original habitat;
- integrity of the wild species;
- migratory behavior;
- natural adaptations including to non-native diseases; and
- ecological benefits wild buffalo provide the ecosystem.

The elements (or issues) of A Manage Wild Buffalo like Wild Elk in Montana alternative include:

- continuing the Designated Surveillance Area management of cattle in place of an Interagency Bison Management Plan;
- no capturing for slaughter;
- no capturing for quarantine;
- no capturing for culling or terminal pastures;
- no population control experiments, e.g. sterilization, birth-control, etc.;
- no privatization or domestication;
- no vaccination;
- no hazing deadlines;
- no helicopter hazing;
- no government hazing of wild buffalo unless there is an imminent threat to cattle present on private land;
- no government trespassing on private land where buffalo are welcome;
- cooperating with MDOT and NPS in creating wildlife safe passages in wildlife corridors;
- cooperating with landowners in reducing fencing; and
- cooperating with landowners wanting to retire cattle and sheep grazing allotments.

The objectives of A Manage Wild Buffalo Like Wild Elk in Montana alternative include developing a management plan that is:

- based on recognizing wild buffalo as a native wildlife species;
- good for wildlife and habitat;
- environmentally preferred;
- culturally acceptable to the majority of American Indian tribes and Montanans;
- most beneficial for American Indian tribes with treaty rights;
- most acceptable to people visiting and living in gateway communities in the Yellowstone region; and
- least costly to taxpayers.

The evaluation goals of A Manage Wild Buffalo Like Wild Elk in Montana alternative include:

- Managing cattle as the effective disease risk management plan in Montana.
- Managing wild buffalo like wild elk on public lands.