

Buffalo Field Campaign



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BFC Saves 300 Wild Bison, Including 100 Newborn Calves, from Slaughter

In May of 2007 members of a Montana cattle herd tested positive for the livestock disease brucellosis. Although bison were not the source of infection, the Montana Board of Livestock convened an emergency meeting in Helena and announced its intent to slaughter all 300 wild bison that were in the state at the time. The Board must have made the decision in private before the meeting, as Buffalo Field Campaign (BFC) patrols documented livestock agents erecting a new bison trap near West Yellowstone while the Board met in Helena.

BFC immediately launched an emergency grassroots campaign to save the herd. Action alerts and a news release, with links to video and photographs of the very bison sentenced to die, generated major news stories and catalyzed a groundswell of public action. Stories on the planned slaughter quoting BFC ran in such prominent papers as *The London Times* and *The New York Times*.

The Montana Governor, the Department of Livestock, and the Yellowstone Superintendent received a flood of phone calls and emails from around the world. According to sources within Yellowstone, the volume of emails was so heavy

that it overwhelmed the park's email system. Within days Superintendent Lewis and Governor Schweitzer convened a joint news conference to announce that they had reached an agreement to spare the bison.



A few of the many wild bison spared from slaughter this past spring
Photo courtesy of Ken Cole, BFC

This major victory was a tangible reminder of the power of Buffalo Field Campaign's grassroots approach. While it is undoubtedly the most visible and rewarding victory BFC achieved during the 2006-2007 field season, it came about as the result of a well-planned and targeted long-term strategy to keep the public informed and engaged, and to hold decision-makers accountable for their actions.

This singular achievement, and the fact that this herd remains free today within the wilds of Yellowstone, is a strong reminder that we can make a difference. This victory was the direct result of BFC's field patrols, hard work, and persistence and should be a great source of pride to everyone who has ever contributed to the work of Buffalo Field Campaign. While temporarily protecting 300 bison is cause for celebration, BFC will remain active and in the field until America's only continuously wild population is permanently protected on its entire range. ●

The Yellowstone Bison Need Your Help

History Repeating: The 21st Century Slaughter

The wild buffalo of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem (GYE) are the last genetically pure remnant of the great herds of millions that once thundered across the American plains. Descended from just 23 buffalo that survived the 19th century slaughter, they are the only buffalo to continuously occupy their native habitat. Wild and unfenced, this unique population holds the key to the future of wild buffalo in America.



A stack of 40,000 buffalo hides in 1878 shows the enormity of the 19th century slaughter.

During the summer, buffalo freely roam the meadows and grasslands of the Yellowstone Plateau. Each winter, as snow obscures the grass from which their bodies are built, buffalo migrate to lower elevations. As spring approaches, hundreds of buffalo gather on the Horse Butte Peninsula, National Forest lands, to calve, returning to the park's interior later in the spring.

Their yearly migration draws the buffalo into a zone of violent conflict. Montana manages America's last wild buffalo through an aggressive policy of slaughtering, shooting, hunting, hazing, and quarantining buffalo that enter the state. ☹



Artwork courtesy of Cindy Rosin, BFC



Mad cowboy disease –
hazing bison off public land
Photo courtesy of Stephanie Munce, BFC

Why Are the Last Wild Buffalo Being Killed?

Buckling to pressure from the livestock industry, Montana has adopted a zero-tolerance policy for wild buffalo. The cattle-producers' influence is so pervasive that the mission of the National Park Service to protect wildlife for future generations has been entirely subverted.

The Montana Department of Livestock claims that Montana's cattle industry would suffer if buffalo were allowed to enter Montana. However, there has never been a documented case of wild buffalo transmitting brucellosis to livestock.

Over 120,000 elk inhabit the GYE. Elk, which also carry brucellosis, freely roam without drawing the ire of cattle ranchers.

The livestock industry views wild buffalo as a source of competition for grass on Western public lands and slaughters buffalos as a means of eliminating this perceived competition. Wild buffalo represent a spirit of freedom and independence that stands in stark contrast to heavily subsidized public lands livestock grazing. As a result, Montana's livestock industry has forced upon the state and federal agencies a plan whereby wild bison are killed for merely following their instincts.

Today's buffalo slaughter is a continuation of a centuries-old range war that has already taken the lives of millions of buffalo. ☹

Are American Bison at Risk of Extinction?

On August 15, 2007, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service issued its finding in response to a petition filed by a Minnesota citizen, James Horsley, on January 5, 1999 to list Yellowstone bison as a Distinct Population Segment under the Endangered Species Act.

The Fish & Wildlife Service ruled that Yellowstone bison do not warrant listing as an endangered species because the Interagency Bison Management Plan is "working with regard to successful management of the YNP bison herd."

However, there is no evidence that the interagency plan has considered genetic diversity and subpopulation structure in the management actions that have led to the slaughter of more than 5,000 wild bison by the state of Montana and U.S. National Park Service since 1985.

Scientist Natalie Halbert wrote in 2003 that, "The current practice of culling bison without regard to possible subpopulation structure has potentially negative consequences of reduced genetic diversity and alteration of current genetic constitution both within individual subpopulations and the overall YNP bison population."

Buffalo Field Campaign believes the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service failed to adequately review the evidence that bison are in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of their native range in Yellowstone.

The Fish & Wildlife Service needs to take a second look at the on-going destruction of America's last wild bison, the loss of their native habitat and extirpation from their native range, climate change, non-native disease, and the inadequacy of the interagency plan to protect genetic diversity and allow for natural migration of bison. It is time to restore America's last wild bison herds to their native range. Join our campaign to protect the Yellowstone bison at www.buffalofieldcampaign.org and spread the word. ☹



Photo courtesy of
Ken Cole, BFC

Support the Buffalo Field Campaign Today!

Buffalo Field Campaign (BFC) is the only group working in the field every day to protect the last wild buffalo. Volunteers defend the buffalo on their native habitat and document every move made against them. During the severe winter of 1996-97 the DOL slaughtered 1,084 buffalo, the most killed in a single year since the 19th century. Tribal and environmental activists organized BFC in 1997 to defend the buffalo on the frontlines and educate the world about their plight. BFC works with people of all nations to protect these sacred beings and advocates for tribal and citizen involvement in management decisions affecting the herd. A true grassroots organization, BFC is made possible by the support of people throughout Montana, across the country, and around the world.



We Need Your Help to Protect the Last Free Roaming Wild Buffalo

Please make a tax deductible donation to the Buffalo Field Campaign today!

Your donations feed, clothe, equip and house volunteers, support our public education and outreach efforts, and help us protect native wild buffalo!

Thank You!

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

My contribution of: \$25 ___ \$50 ___ \$100 ___ Other \$ ___

- Send me a receipt for my tax-deductible donation.
- Add me to your confidential weekly email update list.
- My email address is _____
- Let me know about other ways I can help the buffalo.
- Please send me ___ newsletters to redistribute.

BFC Merchandise (shipping included in price):

- Notecards: \$15/pack of 10 (see new art on the back page)
- T-shirts: \$20 each (pictured above, please specify size)
- Current BFC DVDs: \$10 each
- Let Buffalo Roam bumper stickers: \$1 each

Send check or money order (no cash please)

Buffalo Field Campaign

P.O. Box 957

West Yellowstone, Montana 59758

Solutions to the Slaughter

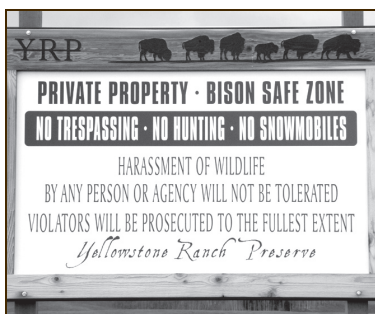
Protecting wild bison on their year-round habitat in Montana starts with their right to access Gallatin National Forest lands surrounding Yellowstone National Park. In addition to year-round habitat, the Interagency Bison Management Plan must be scrapped and the Montana Department of Livestock divested of any and all authority over management of native wild bison.

For more sensible, feasible solutions to the slaughter and harassment of America's last wild bison please visit: www.buffalofieldcampaign.org/actnow/solutions.html



Captured wild bison in quarantine
Photo courtesy of Darrell Geist, BFC

The Horse Butte Peninsula, one of the buffalo's chosen calving grounds, now hosts Montana's largest Buffalo Safe Zone. The Galanis family purchased the former 700+ acre Munns Ranch, and has created Yellowstone Ranch Preserve where wild bison are always welcome, and the Department of Livestock is not. Horse Butte is now completely cattle-free! The DOL doesn't plan to respect these private property rights, so stay tuned for a potential showdown this spring!



BFC stands every day to document harassment of the bison.
Photo courtesy of Stephanie Munce, BFC

On the Frontlines

Buffalo Field Campaign operates daily patrols along bison migration corridors near the boundaries of Yellowstone National Park. Patrols remain in the field from sunrise to sunset at times of year when buffalo are in Montana, usually from November until June. Volunteers protect the bison, record still and video images of actions taken against them, and document the environmental toll these operations inflict upon all wild species in the area.

The experience of days in the presence of wild buffalo provides BFC volunteers with unparalleled knowledge, awareness, and passion, and inspires a wide-range of initiatives designed to permanently protect the Yellowstone herd. BFC is the world's primary source of news and information on the buffalo's plight. For more than a decade BFC has informed and activated thousands of people on the wild buffalo of Yellowstone and Montana and their ongoing mistreatment.

Buffalo
Field Campaign
P.O. Box 7941
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Photo courtesy of Ken Cole, BFC

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 bison 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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Ways to Help Protect the Buffalo!

Contribute to BFC!

Make a tax-deductible donation. Individual donors contribute the bulk of BFC's funding. Make a secure online donation or send a check in the mail today. Together we will gain lasting protection for the buffalo!

Get Involved!

Contact BFC for information on becoming a front lines volunteer (room, board, and gear provided), hosting video showings, circulating petitions, distributing newsletters, sponsoring "Bucks for Buffalo" jars, and other ways to raise awareness and support for BFC and the last wild buffalo. Email buffalo@wildrockies.org or call (406) 646-0070.

Updates from the Field!

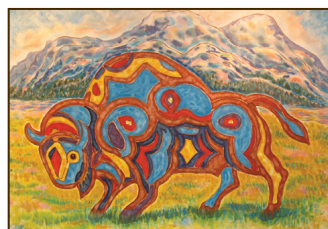
Subscribe to BFC's weekly email newsletter. Send your email address to bfc-media@wildrockies.org and visit www.BuffaloFieldCampaign.org for more information.

Raise Your Voice!

Please contact these decision-makers and urge them to protect the buffalo. Visit www.buffalofieldcampaign.org/actnow/politicians.html or email bfc-media@wildrockies.org for more information.

- Contact the Fish & Wildlife Service to support Endangered Species Act protection for the American bison and their native habitat.

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Featured on
BFC's full color
notecards.

- Contact Montana Governor Brian Schweitzer and demand year-round habitat for wild bison in Montana and removal of Department of Livestock authority over them. Remind him that tourism is a major part of Montana's economy and that wild bison are a treasured national icon.

Montana Governor Brian Schweitzer
State Capitol
Helena, MT 59620
brianschweitzer@mt.gov
(P) 406-444-3111

- Encourage Yellowstone National Park to stop working for livestock interests! Ask the Park to end its involvement in the Interagency Bison Management Plan and to take more proactive measures to protect wild, migrating bison and their habitat.

Yellowstone National Park
Superintendent Suzanne Lewis
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suzanne_lewis@nps.gov
(P) 307-344-2022