

VIA EMAIL

June 24, 2004

Bob Dennee, Gallatin National Forest
U.S. Forest Service
Federal Building, 10 E. Babcock Avenue
Box 130, Bozeman, MT 59771

RE: FOIA request for release of public records and granting of fee petition waiver

Dear Bob,

Thank you for your assistance in accommodating my review of Gallatin National Forest records at the Bozeman office. At the behest of the Buffalo Field Campaign, I am submitting a request under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and USDA Regulations at 7 CFR for release of public records held by the agency regarding the Royal Teton Ranch land acquisition and easement.

During my visit, I identified the records in question with post-it notes including the number of pages to be copied, or the title of bound documents.

Buffalo Field Campaign is a nonprofit organization incorporated in the state of Montana in 1997 whose projects educate and involve the public in finding solutions to the Yellowstone bison slaughter. I believe that the BFC meets the criteria for a fee petition waiver under 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(4)(A)(iii) and ask that the U.S. Forest Service grant such a waiver. I've outlined a number of reasonable and specific ways in which the public interest is served by Buffalo Field Campaign's demonstrated capacity to communicate with a broad section of the American people:

- 1) Buffalo Field Campaign newsletter. Each year we print and distribute over 100,000 copies of our newsletter to the public in all 50 states providing information on how citizens can get involved including measures to provide habitat for Yellowstone's bison herd. The Royal Teton Ranch is a critical component of this issue, and we believe the public has limited knowledge of how this land acquisition and conservation easement is being implemented. The BFC newsletter is an effective means of communication with the public.
- 2) Buffalo Field Campaign email list serve. Our electronic list serve reaches a broad section of the American people on a regular basis disclosing important information about public agency's operations and activities, including those of the U.S. Forest Service, and the agency's role in managing public lands for indigenous wildlife species including the Yellowstone bison. Thousands of people receive our list serve postings and

represent a broad section of the public including businesses, nonprofit and public interest groups, scientists, tribal members, members of the media, educators, and students, among others.

3) Buffalo Field Campaign web site. Very little information is readily accessible to the public concerning the Royal Teton Ranch land acquisition and easement agreements. A search of the Gallatin National Forest's web site revealed very little, if any information about this land agreement. Information that we compile from the FOIA records request will also be posted to our web site, contributing significantly to the body of information available to the public in a forum that is readily accessible, without the public having to incur the cost and time involved in making a FOIA request.

The Buffalo Field Campaign is an important entity contributing significantly to the public's understanding of efforts to provide habitat for Yellowstone's bison herd on public lands, including U.S. Forest Service lands acquired, and under easement from the Royal Teton Ranch. The Buffalo Field Campaign has no commercial interest in the records requested, and we request a waiver of fees, and release of the public records.

Sincerely,

/s/

Darrell Geist
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/s/

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