



**BUFFALO FIELD CAMPAIGN**

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Chairman Kelly Flynn and members of the House Fish, Wildlife, and Parks committee Montana House of Representatives  
PO Box 200400  
Helena, MT 59620-0400

**BUFFALO FIELD CAMPAIGN COMMENTS ON HB 176 – DO NOT PASS**

Mr. Chairman and members of the House Fish, Wildlife, and Parks committee,

On behalf of Buffalo Field Campaign I am submitting testimony on HB 176. Mr. Chairman, I request that my testimony be entered into the hearing record. Thank you.

Buffalo Field Campaign opposes HB 176 and the sponsor's attempt to amend Montana's wild buffalo license statute MCA 87-2-730 to permit the use of crossbows.

Our primary objection to HB 176 is it adds another means of taking wild buffalo from Montana's landscape without providing habitat to support a viable population in our expansive state.

Our second objection to HB 176 is there is no demonstrated need to add another means of taking wild buffalo in Montana.

Under MCA 81-2-120 Montana state hunters cannot hunt wild buffalo without Dept. of Livestock approval. According to Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, in the last ten years, of 82,832 applicants, 426 hunters drew wild buffalo tags.

Outside of Yellowstone National Park, migratory buffalo that retain their identity as a wildlife species seasonally occupy about 0.1% of Montana's

94 million acres of habitat.

Biologists have found the conservation status of wild buffalo as a wildlife species in Montana is "at risk because of very limited and/or potentially declining population numbers, range and/or habitat, making it vulnerable to global extinction or extirpation in the state."

More recently, Buffalo Field Campaign and Western Watersheds Project petitioned to list the Yellowstone buffalo as Threatened or Endangered under the Endangered Species Act in part based on the lack of regulatory mechanisms to preserve a wild population of the migratory species in Montana.

The dire conservation status of wild buffalo in Montana is a consequence of MCA 81-2-120, a statute that has no provision to conserve wild buffalo, but is based entirely on taking the wildlife species by hazing or harassing buffalo from habitat, capturing buffalo in pens for shipment to slaughterhouses, hunting buffalo without providing habitat to support a viable population, quarantining or domesticating wild buffalo, and agency shootings.

Buffalo Field Campaign encourages committee members to vote against HB 176 and to not pass the bill without striking the amendment to MCA 87-2-730 permitting another means of taking wild buffalo without providing habitat in Montana to support a viable population.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel Brister". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Daniel Brister, MS  
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## **About Buffalo Field Campaign**

Buffalo Field Campaign was founded in 1997 to protect the natural habitat of wild migratory buffalo and native wildlife, to stop the slaughter and harassment of America's last wild buffalo as well as to advocate for their lasting protection, and to work with people of all Nations to honor the sacredness of the wild buffalo.

Buffalo Field Campaign is located in West Yellowstone, Gallatin County, Montana, and is supported by volunteers and citizens in Montana, Idaho and Wyoming, and by people from around the world who value America's native wildlife and the ecosystems upon which they depend, and enjoy the natural wonders of our irreplaceable public lands.

As an organization and on behalf of our members, Buffalo Field Campaign is deeply concerned and actively involved in protecting the last remaining descendants of indigenous buffalo in North America to occupy their original range.

Buffalo Field Campaign publicizes the plight of the buffalo, works to end their slaughter by government agencies, and advocates for the long-term protection of viable populations of wild buffalo and year-round habitat.

Buffalo Field Campaign actively engages the American public to honor and protect our cultural heritage by allowing wild buffalo to exist as an indigenous wildlife species fulfilling their ecological role on their native landscape.

Buffalo Field Campaign volunteers patrol habitat where buffalo migrate within the Yellowstone and Madison River drainages. These direct experiences with buffalo on their native habitats inform our actions and strengthen our commitment to gaining permanent protections for America's last wild buffalo.