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NBA Weekly Update for May 28, 2021

The Weekly Update is a service designed to provide National Bison Association members with news and information affecting bison production and marketing. Many items in the Weekly Update are reprinted from outside sources. The content of those articles does not necessarily reflect the policy position of the National Bison Association. The articles are reproduced here only as a means to keep our membership informed as much as possible of all information and opinions relating to bison that is circulating publicly.

Happy Memorial Day from the NBA

The National Bison Association would like to wish everyone a safe and fun Memorial Day weekend. We also want to extend our thanks to



all the men and women who gave the ultimate sacrifice on this day of remembrance. Please note, the NBA office will be closed on Monday in observance of the holiday.

Less Than One Month Until Summer Conference!

NBA SUMMER CONFERENCE AGENDA

SUNDAY- JUNE 27TH

Registration Open at 4 pm - Little America Resort Conference Reception & Center of Excellence Fundraiser - 5 pm



MONDAY TUESDAY

7:30 AM	Depart for Memphis Ranch	9:00 AM	Bison Emergencies 101
9:30 AM	Depart for Cold Creek Buffalo	11:00 AM	Bison Fencing Panel Discussion
NOON	Lunch at The Terry Ranch	NOON	Lunch at Little America
2:00 PM	Drought Mitigation 101	2:00 PM	The Emerging Carbon Market
3:15 PM	RMBA & NBA Member Meetings	4:00 PM	Bison Marketplace Update
4:30 PM	Bus Returns to Little America	4:30 PM	Center of Excellence at SDSU
6:00 PM	Dinner and Benefit Auction	6:00 PM	Closing Banquet Dinner

Please Register by June 11th at www.bisoncentral.com

The deadline to reserve your discounted lodging at <u>Little America Hotel and Resort</u> is June 4th. Please <u>reserve online here</u>, or call 800-235-6396 and request the National Bison Association room block. Room rates are \$122/night/double occupancy and \$132/night triple/quad. Prices apply before and after conference, pending availability. Please note, the hotel is currently sold out on Sunday evening. We are working on adding rooms to our block, but in the meantime attendees may want to make a reservation at the <u>La Quinta Hotel</u>, less than a mile away, for Sunday evening. Rooms are still available at Little America on Monday and Tuesday.

Please also register for the conference by June 11th. You can register online here, or call the NBA at (303) 292-2833 to register by phone. Get all the details at https://bisoncentral.com/nba-summer-conference/.

Featured Speakers

Drought Mitigation - Pat Thomson and Roland Kroos - Pat Thomson is the longtime manager of the Durham Ranch in Wyoming, which has been practicing holistic management and drought mitigation with consultant Roland Kroos for over 20 years. Here, the two will share their expertise on how to manage your herds through droughts.

Bison Emergencies 101 - Kayla Brown, DVM is a veterinarian out of Hot Springs, SD and works with a lot of buffalo throughout the Black Hills. Dr. Brown was also the 2021 Gold Trophy Show and Sale veterinarian for the NBA. Here she will share her tips and expertise on what you should do in case of a bison emergency while the vet's on the way.

Fencing for Bison - Moritz Espy and Carie Starr will share their thoughts on fencing for bison based on your location and operation. Carie Starr owns and operates Cherokee Valley Bison out of Ohio and runs her herd along a busy road and close to population centers, and needs to fence accordingly. Moritz Espy is the manager of the famed 777 Bison Ranch in South Dakota and fences in more rural setting, but also practices rotational grazing and will share his fencing advice accordingly. The duo will discuss types of fence, materials, post-options, tools, techniques and much more.

Emerging Carbon Market - The carbon credit market that is emerging in American agriculture today has lots of potential for bison producers, given the vast carbon sinks that our animals graze on. To learn more about this opportunity, we will hear from representatives from Grassroots Carbon, who are working with farmers and ranchers across the country to help them add value to their operations through the emerging carbon credit market.

Center of Excellence for Bison Studies - A lot of members know Dr. Jeff Martin, who is the research director at the Center of Excellence for Bison Studies at South Dakota State University, but also grew up in the buffalo world with his bison-producing parents, Kris and

Tom Martin in WI. Dr. Martin has worked on a variety of bison-specific research projects over the years and here will give an update on the COE's newly funded bison research projects and other activities.

Featured Activities

Sunday Evening Welcome Reception - Please join us Sunday evening at Little America Resort in Cheyenne, WY at 5 pm for our conference welcome reception that will feature a fundraiser for the new Center of Excellence for Bison Studies! We'll be on the Hathaway Patio for some drinks and Hors d'oeuvres while we enjoy an informal cornhole tournament, in which for a \$20 entry fee, you can compete in the "Bison Bag Toss" with the top winner going home with the customized bison cornhole set of your choice! The other two sets will be auctioned off the following night at our benefit auction.

Monday Ranch Tours - We'll be departing bright and early on Monday morning for our bison ranch tours, in which busing will provided, but attendees are welcome to follow along with provided directions. First stop will be Gregg and Tami Nott's Memphis Ranch in Carr, CO, and will feature their relatively new bison start-up and "mini- farmers market" where attendees can see the Nott's farmer's market booth as well as those of a few of their farmers market colleagues who will be handing out coffee, juice, pastries, breakfast burritos and more! After touring their operation, we'll head back to Wyoming en route to Boyd and Allison Meyer's Cold Creek Buffalo operation, located on the historic Terry Bison Ranch. Here we'll be able to tour the herd on a train like in the olden days, and take in a demonstration of bison handling in Cold Creek Buffalo's state of the art handling facility.

Benefit Auction - We'll have our usual benefit auction fundraiser on Monday evening, raising funds for the association and our affiliated foundations. Please be sure to bring your benefit auction items, and our trusty auctioneer, Jud Seaman - Quality Auction Services, will guarantee a good time and you can help sustain our collective work for the betterment of bison. Please bring your donated items with you to Monday's dinner and bid often!

Custom Mark V Rifle Raffle - We're fortunate to have Rocky Mountain Bison President, John Graves involved in the conference as John is also an employee of Wyoming-based Weatherby Rifles. John has graciously offered a custom Weatherby Mark V Rifle for our conference raffle that will include commemorative branding on the gun stock, and will come with a few hard-to-get boxes of ammunition. Tickets will only be sold at the conference and we'll draw the winner at the Tuesday evening closing dinner.

Don't miss out on this great opportunity, please register today!

GTSS Committee Recommends Show and Sale Return to Denver

The National Bison Association Gold Trophy Show and Sale (GTSS) met via teleconference this week to discuss plans for the 2022 show and sale.

The group unanimously recommended returning the GTSS to the National Western Stock Show in Denver, Colorado in January 2022. The GTSS had moved to Rapid City, SD this past year, as NWSS was postponed to 2022. The NBA board of directors will then consider the committee recommendation at their next meeting on June 27th at the Summer Conference.

The National Western Stock Show complex is being completely renovated. While the bison pens and sale barn will be completed, other areas of the complex will still be under construction. However, the continued construction affords much better parking for both vehicles and trailers at NWSS, and completely modernizes and updates the grounds.

While the schedule for the 2022 NWSS is still being finalized, the group is confident that bison will remain the last sale of the stock show, which would put the GTSS sale on January 22, 2022. This allows for planning a corresponding Winter Conference with presumed dates to be January 19 - 22. Please mark your calendars and plan to join us and stay tuned to https://bisoncentral.com/gold-trophy-show-and-sale/ for updates.

Rest in Peace - David Ruhter and Loren Smeester Sr.

The National Bison Association was saddened to learn of the passing of two longtime members this week - David Ruhter, Ruhter Bison in IL, and Loren Smeester Sr., Silver Bison Ranch in WI. David was instrumental in founding the Illinois/Indiana Bison Association and always collaborated with the NBA in anything we'd approach he and his family with. Loren was a longtime fixture at NBA conferences that he would attend with his son, Loren Jr., and daughter in-law, Marilyn. Our deepest condolences go out to the families during this very difficult time.

Obituary: David L. Ruhter

May 27, 1951 ~ May 25, 2021 (age 69)

David L. Ruhter, 69, of Urbana passed away at 11:54 a.m. on May 25, at Carle Foundation Hospital. He was born on May 27, 1951 in Winfield, Kansas, the son of Paul and Mary (Fulton) Ruhter. He married Kathleen Bair on August 20, 1972. He is survived by his wife, Kathleen, two sons- Mathew(Mary)Ruhter of Frankfort, Illinois and Jeremy(Colleen)Ruhter of Sidney, Illinois; grandchildren- Ian, Rosemary, Lorelei, Zachary and Abilene; one brother- Paul (Shirley) Ruhter of Idaho; two sisters- Polly (Gary) Epting of Kansas and Marilyn (Dave) Younie of Colorado. He is preceded in death by his parents. David graduated from the University of Kansas with a Master's degree in Systematics and Ecology. He pursued his passion for biodiversity and wildlife with a distinguished career in various Zoos and Parks and at the University of Illinois. He was an advocate for animal welfare and developed low stress care and handling protocols that focused on both the animal's physical and mental health. He authored several husbandry articles on antelopes and elephants that became the standard of care within the industry. He reimagined how people and wildlife coexist by advocating for a healthy and respectful relationship between man and this planet. Education was pivotal to his goals in conservation. During his career he appeared regularly on a children show in Nebraska, implemented interactive animal exhibits at the Oklahoma City Zoo, oversaw the building of a environmental education building at the Houston Zoo and launched Earth Camp while Wildlife Director at Silver Springs Park in Florida. His work culminated in his retirement when he saw his ultimate vision realized when he started Ruhter Bison LLC in 2011, using a model of providing a sustainable source of food while building natural habitats and restoring native prairie. One day while looking over his bison grazing, David claimed he had achieved success by proclaiming "life is good". David was deeply devoted to his family and his greatest pride were his children and grandchildren. A kind soul was lost to the world but the love he had for it will be felt for generations Memorials may be made to The Nature Conservancy. Condolences may be shared at www.renner-wikoffchapel.com.

Read more.

Obituary: Loren W. Smeester Sr.

Loren W. Smeester Sr., age 90, of Hudson, WI, formerly of River Falls and Baldwin, WI, passed away on May 25, 2021 after a battle with cancer. Loren was born on February 20, 1931 to Jules and Fay (Rector) Smeester in Iron Mountain, MI. He was raised in Amberg, WI and graduated from Amberg High School. Though he was offered a basketball college scholarship, he instead decided to enlist in the United States Navy, serving during the Korean Conflict. Upon his discharge, he was united in marriage to his high school sweetheart, Dorothy "Dotty" Tadisch, in 1953 and together they had three children: Loren Jr., John, and Scott. Following a long career as a Business Entrepreneur and Salesman for various business startups, he retired in 1992 to live out his dream of owning his own ranch. He and Dotty decided to sell their home in River Falls and they purchased a bison ranch in Baldwin, a business that is still in the family. After Dotty passed away in 2013, he met Janice Delamater, and the two have spent the last seven years in Green Valley, AZ.

Read more.

Editor's Note: The following news stories were distributed by organizations not affiliated with the National Bison Association. They may not reflect the

opinions or the positions held by the NBA on matters such as genetic integrity, animal management, and other issues.



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Better than beef? 3 bison recipes to try at home

(From The Napa Valley Register)

Nicholas Skajewski, owner and executive chef of <u>Skajewski Catering</u> in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, has been involved in the culinary industry for over eight years.

Skajewski says that his catering business keeps him on the go creating custom menus and meals for a steady stream of events, from intimate in-home dinners to elaborate wedding receptions. He is constantly researching and refining his craft, and takes a special interest in teaching and mentoring culinary students.

Skajewski was recently the regional executive chef for a local hospital system, so he is naturally attracted to preparing healthier foods, such as bison.

"Bison is a leaner protein than beef, offering a healthier option for those looking to reduce their fat or calorie intake," he explains. "Like beef, bison also has intramuscular marbling. However, it's finer and offers a softer and more tender texture. With the lack of fat, bison is milder — and sweet — in flavor, offering extreme versatility in preparation techniques and recipes."

See three bison recipes and read more <u>here</u>.

Bison run loose in Bella Vista, crews able to capture herd (From 5 News Online)

BELLA VISTA, Ark. — A herd of 14 bison is no longer roaming the streets in Bella Vista. After 8 hours of tracking them down, police returned the animals to their owner, Brush Creek Bison in Missouri.

Neighbors in the area say they noticed the bison roaming around their neighborhood as early as 6:50 a.m. Monday.

Police say the bison were first spotted near Glasgow Road and Branchwood, near Fire Station 3.

The bison continued moving across the area, splitting up. Making it harder for police to wrangle them all. However, neighbors had no trouble finding the bison because the bison came to them.

"I see this big ole creature in the road. I had no idea what it was," said Crystal Charman, a resident who saw the bison.

She was on the way to work when a bison made its way to her neighborhood off Glasgow Rd. and Glassgow Drive. At around 10 a.m., another neighbor spotted the bison outside of her home while she was gardening. But rather than running away, she pulled out her phone.

"It was so cool," said Mary Book, who saw bison.

Read more.

Simmental and Bison Genomes Released

(From Progressive Farmer)

The first reference-quality genome assemblies for the iconic North American Yellowstone bison and the Simmental cattle breed have been published in the Journal of Heredity. Animal genome assemblies provide genetic "blueprints" for how they develop and pass on information to their offspring.

The bison assembly will be used in conservation efforts to maintain genetic diversity and to study bison evolution by comparing DNA obtained from fossil specimens sampled from permafrost in the Arctic Circle. The Simmental cattle assembly will contribute to an international effort to survey existing cattle breeds around the world to preserve their genetic diversity and identify variation useful for improving beef and dairy traits in different environments. The two genomes are released together because of the unusual way they were created: a single individual hybrid animal from a bison bull and a Simmental cow. Each cell of the hybrid animal contained one copy of the bison and one copy of the Simmental cattle genome.

Researchers used a process called trio-binning, wherein the genome of a single individual and its purebred parents are fully sequenced. With interspecies crosses, this results in a complete, highly accurate genome assembly from each species. These extraordinary high-quality reference genomes meet or exceed the most accurate and complete mammalian genome assemblies to date.

These resources were created by researchers from the USDA's Agricultural Research Service at the U.S. Meat Animal Research Center (USMARC), the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC), the National Animal Germplasm Program (NAGP) and the U.S. Dairy Forage Research Center (USDFRC). This effort was in partnership with the American Simmental Association (ASA), together with university partners at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln (UNL), Colorado State University (CSU) and the University of California – Santa Cruz (UCSC).

Read more.

All about America's national mammal, the bison

(From Richmond.com)

son have roamed North American prairies and grasslands for thousands of years. Just recently, in 2016, they were officially named the national mammal when President Barack Obama signed the National Bison Legacy Act. According to the National Park Service, "This majestic animal joins the ranks of the bald eagle as the official symbol of our country — and much like the eagle, it's one of the greatest conservation success stories of all time."

But first: What's the difference between bison and buffalo?

Although these terms are often used interchangeably due to their similar body structure and coloring, they are actually different animals.

Both bison and buffalo are in the Bovidae family, along with sheep, goat and domestic cattle. One can spot bison from a protruding hump near their shoulders and long goatee. Their horns are shorter than a buffalo's, and they have larger heads, as well.

There are two types of buffalo: those native to Africa (African or Cape buffalo) and Asia (water buffalo), the latter of which were introduced in Europe (think buffalo-milk mozzarella). Bison are found in North America and Europe.

Gentle giants they are not

Bison are not particularly docile animals. Males can weigh up to 2,000 pounds, and females weigh up to 1,000 pounds. Although nearsighted, they have keen hearing and smell, and they can run up to 35 miles per hour. If they feel threatened, bison will show aggression and should be treated with caution.

Read more.

Bison are back at Belwin

(From St. Croix 360)

We are pleased to announce the arrival of the 2021 <u>NorthStar Bison</u> herd to Belwin! Each spring since 2008, NorthStar (Cameron, Wis.) has released a group of juvenile males onto Belwin's prairie. This year's herd will reside at Belwin through early autumn.

The public are welcome to observe the herd from Belwin's Bison Platform and viewing area, which is located at 15551 Division St., Afton, MN.

Observation Guidelines

- Open daily from dawn to dusk
- Portable, ADA-accessible restroom is available from May to September
- The first bison platform is fully accessible
- Please stay in the designated viewing areas to observe the bison. While the fence
 around the parking area is not electric, the rest of the prairie is surrounded by
 wildlife-friendly electric fencing. Please do not touch the fence.
- Follow Minnesota Department of Health guidelines on distancing
- See Belwin's General Guidelines for more information

More information: belwin.org/visit/#bison info@belwin.org

651-436-5189

Read more.

American Prairie Reserve to offer 20 bison harvest opportunities

(From The Sidney Herald)

American Prairie Reserve is pleased to once again offer an annual public bison harvest on its Sun Prairie property. The harvest is in addition to the hunting opportunities for a variety of wildlife species that are already available on American Prairie land. The conservation organization emphasizes public access as a cornerstone of the project, and has always included hunting and bison harvest in its long-term management plans.

This year, American Prairie is offering a total of 20 opportunities, with most being awarded in such a way that gives preference to the people who live and work in Montana and the communities surrounding the Reserve.

"We've been offering bison harvests to the public since 2018, and each year the interest from the public grows," said Damien Austin, Vice President and Reserve Superintendent. "Last year we saw more than 3,100 people enter and we received positive feedback from hunters who said it was a terrific experience."

American Prairie is awarding bison harvest opportunities through an online drawing that is

free to enter. Harvests will be designated as follows: SEVEN opportunities to local residents, NINE to Montana residents, THREE to members of the Fort Peck, Fort Belknap, or Rocky Boy communities, and one to the general public worldwide.

"We routinely use harvest as a bison management tool and as a check on the population size," said Austin. "As an organization, we also recognize the public benefit of the harvest. Our fellow Montanans have a deep respect for this landscape and its inhabitants, and being able to provide this access to the bison herd puts food on tables and supports a way of life we value here."

The drawing is free to enter, and registrants awarded the opportunity to harvest are required to pay a non-refundable fee of \$300. Eligible individuals must fill out and submit the form by 11:59 PM on June 30, 2021. The 20 total recipients will be randomly selected on July 9, 2021.

Source.

Endangered Species Act listing proposed for lesser prairiechicken

(From Agri-Pulse)

The Fish and Wildlife Service is proposing federally protected status under the Endangered Species Act for two populations of the lesser prairie-chicken that occupy parts of Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Kansas and Colorado.

"There has been a substantial decrease in the range of the species, primarily as a result of habitat loss and fragmentation," <u>FWS said in a Q&A</u>, which cited factors such as "energy development, conversion of grasslands to cropland, and woody vegetation encroachment into the species' native grassland habitat."

FWS is proposing to list the southern distinct population segments of the bird as endangered, which under the ESA means it is in danger of extinction. That DPS "encompasses lesser prairie-chicken populations in eastern New Mexico and across the southwest Texas Panhandle," <u>FWS said in a news release</u>. "Habitat in this DPS is comprised largely of shinnery oak prairie."

FWS has proposed listing the northern DPS of the prairie chicken as threatened, which under the ESA means it is in danger of becoming endangered. This DPS "encompasses lesser prairie-chicken populations in southeastern Colorado, south-central to southwestern Kansas, western Oklahoma and the northeast Texas Panhandle" and short-grass, mixed-grass and sand sagebrush ecoregions.

Along with threatened status, FWS has proposed a rule for the northern DPS that would exempt routine ag operations and prescribed fire from the ESA's prohibition against "taking" the species. The ESA defines "take" as "to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect or attempt to engage in any such conduct."

The bird's population once numbered in the "hundreds of thousands" across the southern Great Plains, <u>FWS said in a news release</u>. However, aerial survey results from 2012 through 2020 estimate a five-year average LPC population of 27,384 in the five states. "It is estimated that lesser prairie-chicken habitat has diminished across its historical range by about 90 percent."

Read more.

USTR's Tai meets with China's top trade official

(From Agri-Pulse)

U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai spoke with China's top trade official Wednesday night in an "introductory virtual meeting" as the <u>Chinese continue to make big purchases of</u>

U.S. agricultural commodities and the U.S. farm sector counts on strong trade to continue.

Tai, according to a statement released by the Office of the USTR, raised "issues of concern" in her conversation with Chinese Vice Premier Liu He, and American Farm Bureau Federation Senior Director of Congressional Relations David Salmonsen says it's good that the two countries are talking trade.

"It's good that they're talking on the trade front ... and we hope they can move forward and keep talking and move to a phase two agreement," Salmonsen told Agri-Pulse.

The U.S. and China last year signed the Economic and Trade Agreement Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the People's Republic of China, known more commonly as the "phase one" deal. Under that deal, China agreed to drastically boost its imports of U.S. ag commodities as well as make significant policy changes, such as lifting its zero-tolerance for growth hormones in beef and making its biotech approval process quicker and more transparent.

The USDA's Economic Research Service on Wednesday raised its forecast for U.S. <u>agricultural exports</u> in the 2021 fiscal year to a record-breaking \$164 billion, largely on massive shipments to China.

Read more.

USDA Announces New Initiative to Quantify Climate Benefits of Conservation Reserve Program

(From USDA News Release)

WASHINGTON, May 25, 2021 — The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) today announced an initiative to quantify the climate benefits of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contracts. This multi-year effort will enable USDA to better target CRP toward climate outcomes and improve existing models and conservation planning tools while supporting USDA's goal of putting American agriculture and forestry at the center of climate-smart solutions to address climate change. "CRP is a powerful tool for implementing voluntary, measurable conservation outcomes to mitigate the impacts of climate change," said FSA Administrator Zach Ducheneaux.

"Nearly 21 million acres currently enrolled in the program prevent the equivalent of more than 12 million tons of carbon dioxide from entering the atmosphere. Further quantifying program benefits will allow us to better target CRP to achieve continued climate wins across environmentally sensitive lands while strengthening our modeling and conservation planning resources for all producers."

CRP Monitoring, Assessment and Evaluation Projects

FSA has historically worked with partners to identify <u>Monitoring</u>, <u>Assessment and Evaluation (MAE)</u> projects to quantify CRP environmental benefits to water quality and quantity, wildlife and rural economies. The agency will now invest \$10 million through this program to measure and monitor the soil carbon sequestration and other climate and environmental benefits of conservation practices over the life of CRP contracts.

This effort will allow USDA to better target climate outcomes through CRP while gaining critical data to calibrate, validate and further improve quantification methods within existing models and tools. One model of focus is the Daily Century Model, or DayCent, which simulates the movement of carbon and nitrogen through agricultural systems and informs the National Greenhouse Gas Inventory. Data will also be used to strengthen the COMET-Farm and COMET-Planner tools, which enable producers to evaluate potential carbon sequestration and greenhouse gas emission reductions based on specific management scenarios.

Request for Proposals

USDA is seeking proposals for projects to survey, sample and measure the climate

benefits of land enrolled in the following CRP practice types over time:

- 1. Predominately Perennial grass with legumes and shrubs, depending on the practice
- 2 Tree
- 3. Wetland, including both mineral and organic soils and both floodplain and non-floodplain wetlands

A project can cover one or more of the above practice types and should be for a three- to five-year term, with the potential for renewal. Projects should be a minimum of \$1 million and not exceed \$9 million.

Read more.



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- 06/11/2021 Texas Bison Association Summer Meeting TX
- 6/27 29/2021 National Bison Assn. Summer Conference Chevenne, WY

Please visit https://bisoncentral.com/calendar/ for details and more up-to-date events. If you have a bison event coming up that's not listed, please send the details to iim@bisoncentral.com and the NBA will post the event on its website at no charge.

Click Here for NBA Calendar of Events





