



National Bison Association

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Weekly Update from the National Bison Association

A news and update service *exclusively* for members of the National Bison Association.
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May 5, 2017

Just 10 Days Left to Register Early for IBC and Save Big!

A kickoff barbecue and concert with Michael Martin Murphy, drone demonstrations, discussions on improving the health of your herd and probability of your ranch, a film festival, fly fishing, golf, horseback riding...what's not to love about the upcoming International Bison Conference set for July 4th- 8th in Big Sky, MT and the surrounding areas.

It's a conference you won't want to miss. But, if you wait more than 10 days, you'll be paying a bit more for the opportunity.

The Early-Bird registration for the 2017 IBC ends on May 15th, so log on to www.ICB2017.com today to register at the Early Bird discounted rate.

2017 IBC Registration Rates:

Early Bird Rate - Register by May 15th

*1st Registrant - \$325**

Guests - \$250

Youth (Ages 4 - 16): \$100

Please register [here](#) by May 15th.

Registration After May 15th:

1st Registrant - \$400

Guests - \$350

Youth (Ages 4 - 16): \$150

Other Registrations:

Trade Show Booth: \$300

Single Day Registrations: \$150/day

July 8th Yellowstone National Park Tour: \$75/person

Extra Dinner Tickets: \$50

Register online at <https://bisoncentral.com/2017-international-bison-conference-registration-form/>

NBA Facilitates Two Bison Advantage Workshops for Tribal Producers

The National Bison Association, in cooperation with South Dakota State University, took the Bison Advantage training program to the Pine Ridge and Rosebud Reservations in south Dakota this week with two sessions structured to assist tribal members in starting and expanding their herds.

NBA Executive Director Dave Carter conducted the two workshops, held Wednesday in Kyle, SD, and Thursday in Mission, SD. Regional Director Mimi Hillenbrand also helped guide the discussion, and Dakota Territory Buffalo Association President Moritz Espy assisted with Thursday's session. On Thursday, NBA Members Alex and Cassie Heim, hosted several of the workshop participants for a tour of their finishing operation and ranch near Wood, SD. The two workshops were hosted by SDSU, through a grant from the USDA Farm Service Agency's Beginning Farmer and Rancher Grant program. Roughly 32 producers, extension agents and tribal officials attended the two sessions.

Carter noted afterwards, "The attendees at the two workshops were extremely engaged, and the conversation each day illustrated the importance that the tribal members place on the cultural importance of buffalo, as well as the commercial opportunity. The two days were very helpful in continuing to build strong working relationship with the tribal communities."

Matheson in Texas for TBA Spring Meeting

NBA Assistant Director, Jim Matheson, is in Fredericksburg, Texas for the Texas Bison Association's annual Spring Meeting. The group will gather Friday night, have a day full of presentations and activities through Saturday, including a fun auction and banquet dinner.

Matheson will provide a presentation on the Bison Advantage as well as an industry update. Other presenters will cover topics of herd health, the association's recent strategic planning efforts and more.

Learn more at texasbison.org.

Bison Reclaim, Restore their Natural Range

(From Voice of America)

Bison once thundered across the North American plains by the millions. But they were hunted to near extinction in the 19th century for their hides. Today, their numbers are growing again, thanks in part to the important role they can play in land restoration.

The 429-hectare [Kankakee Sands Nature Reserve](#) is a sea of tall dried grass, with bits of spring green filling in here and there, but it once was Beaver Lake, the largest body of water in Indiana. Pioneers drained it for farmland in the 19th century. While the Indiana chapter of the Nature Conservancy can't bring back the lake, it can restore the prairie.

And that's where the bison come in.

Doing what bison do

This spring, a dozen or more fuzzy bison calves, notable for their orange hue and tiny stature, will gambol across the landscape.

That's good news, says Ted Anchor, the program manager for this Nature Conservancy project, because although they are very young, they and their herd are responsible for fixing a very old problem: more than 100 years of environmental damage. "By creating this large-scale restoration project, we've been able to harbor all those species that were just barely hanging on."

The Indiana Chapter of the Nature Conservancy has been working for 20 years to restore the prairie at Kankakee Sands. Late last year, they took the final step, bringing in 23 bison, including 16 pregnant cows. The Conservancy now owns 13 herds, in preserves from Mexico to North Dakota.

"Bison are a really easy way to get short grass prairie," Anchor explains. "Just by living and doing what bison do which is eat grasses and make little bison, they create the short grass prairie for us."

Read more. <https://www.voanews.com/a/bison-restore-reclaim-prairie/3835004.html>

How to make a Venison-Bison 'Bowl of Doom'

(From Men's Fitness)

You want the ultimate muscle-building bowl of Paleo-powered protein? Here's our take on the Bowl of Doom—as made famous by the Dallas restaurant Kozy Kitchen—using venison and bison.

Invented by a hungry CrossFitter about a decade ago, [the original Bowl of Doom](#) has become a muscle-building mainstay for average joes and pro athletes (Noah Snydergaard and Chris Bosh are fans) at Kozy Kitchen in Dallas, TX. "It's all Paleo. It works as the perfect pre-workout meal, after-workout meal, whatever you need," [Kozy Kitchen chef Nicholas Pavageaux told *Men's Fitness*](#).

According to Pavageaux, the Bowl of Doom recipe is deceptively simple: a pile of whatever meat you want, plus a couple of eggs, an avocado, and sweet potato hash. Pavageaux's sweet-potato hash recipe remains a secret, however—so I created a Bowl of Doom-inspired recipe for *Men's Fitness* using venison and bison, in the style of Snydergaard's go-to order. (He also adds bacon to his.)

I know venison and bison can be hard to find, especially if you're not a hunter or don't have access to specialty butchers. I had to do some research (and consult with a few helpful friends) to find stores that sold these meats. The bison burgers were more readily available at numerous supermarkets—from Whole Foods to my local chain supermarket—but I had to source a 5-oz venison steak from a nearby family who goes hunting in upstate New York.

Of course, the venison and bison can be substituted with beef and ground turkey or chicken, if that's more your style. Kozy Kitchen also offers it with beef, chicken, wild shrimp, salmon, ribeye, filet, venison sausage, and bacon, and serves it with two eggs. However you choose to do it, it's a high-protein meal that will surely satisfy.

Recipe at <http://www.mensfitness.com/nutrition/what-to-eat/how-make-venison-bison-bowl-doom>

Roaming Free: Baby Bison to Join Fermilab Family

(From the Columbia Chronicle)

Bison will soon roam 2,000 acres of restored Illinois prairie at Fermilab in Batavia, Illinois, just as they did on the Pre-Columbian Great Plains.

About 14 bison calves, raised at Fermilab for environmental reasons rather than research purposes, are expected to be born at the suburban laboratory during the end of April and early May.

"People [will] come just to see the bison, and while they're here, we try and get them interested in science," said Andre Salles, the lab's media relations coordinator.

Fermilab is one of 17 national laboratories funded by the U.S. Department of Energy specializing in the study of particles, researching how atoms make up the universe. Fifty years ago, Fermilab's founding Director Robert Wilson designed the lab with his home state of Wyoming in mind.

"[He designed the site] as a metaphor for the frontier, with the scientists on the frontier of research," Salles said. "Bison are animals [of the Great Plains], so he brought a herd of bison onto the site."

This birthing is a renewal of the bison population, adding another generation to the herd, said Travis Livieri, wildlife biologist at Prairie Wildlife Research in Wellington, Colorado. He said bison are an interesting species because they have a social structure and society.

The bison herd social structure is complex, with the relations between the calves, mothers and older bison changing depending on the season, according to the Prairie Wildlife Research website. In spring, calves are weaned from maternal care and temporary groupings among the young bison form.

Herdsmen Cleofas Garcia, who has been handling bison at Fermilab for 10 years, said like many bison farms, Fermilab's 15 current bison are free to roam around the prairie and are treated largely like wild animals, he added.

"We try not to handle them too much, so if they need to go into wild survival, they can take care of themselves," Garcia said. "Even though we have them fenced in, they can roam in the grass."

Keeping the bison in this free-range setting is beneficial to the prairie ecosystem, Livieri said. The bison stampeding the land and rolling around in the dust creates a specific type of micro-ecosystem for other creatures such as prairie dogs, hawks and special insects.

“Bison—large grazing herbivore—could be considered an ecosystem engineer,” Livieri said.

Read more. http://www.columbiachronicle.com/metro/article_d85dff8c-2c55-11e7-828c-6fc02c4aeff1.html

Local Buffalo roam at Bryan home

(From KGAS TV)

BRYAN, Texas - You may or may not know this but the official National Mammal is the Bison. To clarify, The Bald Eagle is the National Animal. There used to be tens of millions of Bison roaming the country.

Back in the late 1800's though, there were only about 1,000 Bison left. But thanks to private ranchers, there are now more than half a million.

One local private rancher says The Bison is her favorite animal because of their relationship with the Earth.

"Their hoof action on the ground, they don't pull the roots of the grass, and they eat weeds and when they are on an eco system the grass thrives," Beverly Brown said.

Brown's herd also helped create a scholarship at Texas A&M for native American students. The scholarship is for \$40,000.

Bringing Back the Bison

(From National Geographic)

Tens of millions of wild bison once roamed freely across North America, before their populations were decimated by Euro-American settlers in the mid-1800s. Today, [Earthwatch's](#) Chief Scientist, Dr. Cristina Eisenberg, in partnership with the Blackfoot First Nation, is leading a study to help prepare for the return of this iconic species to Alberta's Waterton Lakes National Park and tribal lands in the Canadian Rocky Mountains.

The Missing Force of Nature

Narcisse Blood was a big man, the kind of man who, when he stood up, filled a doorway. A respected leader and member of the Kainai First Nation in Southern Alberta, also known as the Blood Tribe and part of the Blackfoot Confederacy, Narcisse believed in the power of relationships to guide us. 'If you just listen to the relationships,' he said, 'if you honor them, then it's like the stars – everything will align and work the way it has always worked.'

His friendship with [Dr. Cristina Eisenberg](#) began – as many relationships do – on Facebook. In 2013, after he finished reading Cristina's book *The Wolf's Tooth*, Narcisse sent her a Facebook message: 'I read your book and want to be your friend. Can you show me a trophic cascade?' A trophic cascade, which Cristina describes in her book, refers to the relationships between species within a food web. Cristina, [Earthwatch's](#) Chief Scientist and Principal Investigator of the expedition [Restoring Fire, Wolves, and Bison to the Canadian Rockies](#), was surprised to hear from this highly respected Kainai elder, and accepted his friend request immediately.

Several months later, Cristina invited Narcisse and his wife, Alvine Mountain Horse, to her field site in Alberta's Waterton Lakes National Park to show him her research. In this biodiversity hotspot, Cristina, her co-investigators, and her team study the relationships between wolves, elk, fire, grass, and aspen. They spoke about where the wolves had been, how many elk there were, and where aspen had spread into the grassland. They spoke of the fires they had set to maintain the ecosystem. She then turned to Narcisse and Alvine. 'What do you think is going on here?' she asked. 'Well, there's something missing,' Narcisse said.

Read more. <http://voices.nationalgeographic.com/2017/05/02/bringing-back-the-bison/>

FSIS addresses proposed state program changes

(From Meatinplace.com)

Proposed legislative changes to meat and poultry inspection services in various states could make those programs inconsistent with federal requirements, the U.S. Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) said in a [letter](#) to state meat and poultry inspection directors.

State inspection programs must be found to be "at least equal to" the federal program on nine components: statutory authority and food safety regulations, inspection, product sampling programs, staffing, training and supervision, humane handling, compliance, laboratory methods and quality assurance programs, civil rights, and financial accountability.

"Most of the draft legislation we have seen exempts from requiring inspection and labeling certain types of food products, including meat and poultry, depending on the manner and place of sale and the type of purchaser or end consumer. Some of these proposed exemptions appear to be consistent with Federal statutory and regulatory requirements, but many do not," Carl Mayes, assistant administrator for the FSIS Office of Investigation, Enforcement and Audit said, in the letter.

FSIS listed examples where state bills differ from federal requirements:

- State legislation exempting from inspection and regulation the processing of meat and meat products by producers or other business, other than retail stores and restaurants, for sale to consumers who have been informed that the products were processed without inspection.
- State legislation that exempts from state inspection poultry producers that slaughter or prepare 1,000 or fewer birds for intrastate sales, but does not specifically require the producer who raised the poultry also to slaughter them.
- State legislation that would allow rental contracts between certain poultry producers and slaughterhouses, making the rental slaughterhouses exempt from state inspection.
- State legislation that would amend a state's definition of "custom" slaughter and processing to eliminate periodic state review of sanitation and wholesomeness for products produced by these operations. Eliminating these reviews would call into question compliance with federal sanitation requirements for custom slaughter and processing establishments exempt from mandatory inspection.
- State legislation that would permit the slaughtering of livestock and direct sale of meat to consumers who are members of a "herd share" or similar organization that might, in turn, resell the meat. Such a provision would not be permitted under federal custom slaughter exemption provisions, because it does not limit the sale of the livestock to consumers for their personal use.

- The guidance memo may be found at <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/wcm/connect/5894330a-90d9-4316-a096-14b5ea431731/State-MPI-Legislation-Letter-041817.pdf?MOD=AJPERES>.

Historic Bison Birth on Wind River Reservation

(From Associated Press)

CASPER, Wyo. (AP) — A bison calf has been born on Wyoming's Wind River Indian Reservation for the first time in 130 years.

The baby bison was born Wednesday into a herd of 10 animals reintroduced to the reservation last fall.

Jason Baldes with the Eastern Shoshone tribe says the bison calf is "an honor bestowed upon us by the Creator."

White settlers nearly eradicated bison from the West in the 19th century. Antelope and bighorn sheep also have been successfully restored to the reservation after severe declines due to hunting.

<http://k2radio.com/historic-bison-birth-on-wind-river-reservation/>

Ranchers Assessing Death Loss, Stray Cattle Location After Snow Storm

(From the High Plains Journal)

Late spring blizzards in the High Plains aren't very common, especially on the last day of April. Farmers and ranchers in southeastern Colorado, western Kansas and the Texas and Oklahoma panhandles are now dealing with the aftermath. They've been digging out, dealing with electricity losses and searching for missing cattle in snowdrifts, rain and mud conditions.

According to www.krdo.com, May 2, in Springfield, Colorado, hundreds of Baca County cattle have been lost or were killed during the blizzard. Reports are saying up to 30 inches of snow fell in that part of the state. Reports from throughout the area are that the cattle death losses could reach thousands of head throughout the affected region.

According to Facebook posts, the Baca County Conservation District suggests ranchers who have lost animals to document the losses with photographs and have an updated inventory of their livestock on hand. The Farm Service Agency handles the Livestock Indemnity Program, and if it is triggered by this weather event, documentation of losses will be critical for applying for disaster payments.

Full text: <http://tinyurl.com/l5tmeem>

R-CALF USA Submits Plan to White House to Include COOL in NAFTA Renegotiation

(From KXLO-KLCM.com)

Billings, Mont.-Last week R-CALF USA submitted a whitepaper on country of origin labeling (COOL) to White House National Trade Council Director Peter Navarro. Titled "Why and How Mandatory COOL Should Be Reinstated Through the NAFTA Renegotiations & Why and How the NAFTA Rule of Origin for Beef Should be Amended," the whitepaper explains the importance of COOL to both consumers and the U.S. cattle industry and provides a plan for restoring COOL for beef during President Trump's renegotiation of NAFTA.

R-CALF USA CEO Bill Bullard met with Navarro in March during a meeting organized by the Coalition for a Prosperous America (CPA). During that meeting Bullard asked Navarro if he would use the NAFTA renegotiation as a platform to restore COOL and correct the faulty rule-of-origin contained in that agreement. Navarro responded with a request for a more detailed, written request for the changes, which is accomplished with the whitepaper.

Full text: <http://tinyurl.com/mglnlxo>

Conservation Innovation Grants in Colorado

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Colorado is accepting applications for approximately \$300,000 in Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG). Eligible governmental or non-governmental organizations or individuals may apply for grants up to \$75,000 for projects that stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies.

CIG projects are expected to lead to the transfer of conservation technologies, management systems, and innovative approaches (such as market-based systems) into NRCS technical manuals and guides or to the private sector. CIG is used to apply or demonstrate previously proven technology in order to increase adoption with an emphasis on opportunities to scale proven, emerging conservation strategies. CIG funds projects targeting innovative on-the-ground conservation, including pilot projects and field demonstrations.

Applications are due June 2, 2017.

Read more. <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html>

Conservation Collaboration Grants in South Dakota

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) serving South Dakota is seeking proposals for Conservation Collaboration Grants to help address the state's most pressing natural resource concerns. Projects should improve soil health or water quality in South Dakota, provide habitat for local wildlife species of concern, improve the environmental and economic performance of working agricultural lands in the state, or assist communities and groups to build and strengthen local food projects that provide healthy food and economic opportunities.

An emphasis will be placed on projects that build technical capacity of NRCS and partner field conservation employees; utilize local watershed groups to develop and implement projects; and leverage non-federal and non-government resources.

Proposals are due May 26, 2017.

Read more.

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/sd/newsroom/releases/?cid=NRCSEPRD1322433>

Conservation Innovation Grants in South Dakota

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is accepting proposals for Conservation Innovation Grants. NRCS South Dakota will award two new state level proposals of a maximum of \$75,000 each. Proposals are requested from eligible governmental or non-governmental organizations or individuals for competitive consideration of grant awards for projects between one and three years in duration.

Proposals must be received by May 15, 2017.

Read more.

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/sd/newsroom/releases/?cid=NRCSEPRD1318213>