



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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June 2, 2017

Bidding Opens on Two IBC Prizes

Even if you can't get to the International Bison Conference, you have an opportunity to bid on a couple of prizes being offered as a part of the IBC fundraising program!

An on-line auction launched this week will accept bids for the reproduction Shiloh Sharps 1874 Sporter No.3, valued at \$5,000; and a luxurious four-night getaway for two to Flathead Lake Lodge in Montana, valued at \$3,500. Bid online at <https://bradeenauction.hibid.com/catalog/103281/international-bison-conference-online-only-auction/>

The Shiloh Sharps Gun Co. crafted 15 unique reproduction 1874 Sporter No. 3 rifles specifically for the 2017 IBC. Each 45/70 caliber black powder cartridge rifle has a 30" full heavy octagon barrel, with semi-fancy wood, a traditional steel butt-plate, pewter trip, and full Buckhorn and Blade front. Each rifle is engraved with a full buffalo on the hammer side, and is individually numbered. The online auction is for # IBC015.

Flathead lake Lodge is located on the shores of one of the most spectacular lakes in North America. It has been rated in the top 2% best family vacations spots in America. In Montana, the lodge is the highest rated hospitality facility by the Mobile Travel Guide. The dude ranch has received national acclaim from *Better Homes & Gardens*, *Bon Appetite*, *Good Morning America*, *Sunset Magazine*, *Travel & Leisure* and was named Best of the Best by *Kilgore's Ranch and Resort Guide*.

Bradeen Auctions, in conjunction with the National Bison Association (NBA), is pleased to offer an Online Only Fundraising Auction for the 2017 International Bison Conference (IBC). The auction is an online only format, with all bidding taking place online. There are two lots up for bids, one featuring a trip for two to Flathead Lake Lodge in Bigfork, MT in early September and the second lot featuring IBC Shiloh Sharp Rifle No. IBC012. This online only auction is currently open for viewing and bidding. The auction will begin to close on Thursday, July 13 at 6:00 p.m. MDT. This will be the final opportunity for fundraising for the IBC event and the last opportunity for supporters to enjoy a fantastic fall vacation or take home a commemorative rifle.

Registering and bidding for the online auction is very easy. You will need a credit card to get registered and set up an account in the system. The auction is available at

<https://bradeenauction.hibid.com/catalog/103281/international-bison-conference-online-only-auction/>. At the top of the page you will see a button labeled “Login/New Bidder”. This is where you will go to access your account (if you have previously registered with us) or set up your new account. Follow the prompts, enter your payment information and your account will be complete. You can then register for the IBC auction or any of the other auctions listed on the site.

When you place your bids, you can enter a “Max Bid” that will let the system bid on your behalf up to your maximum amount, thus letting you enjoy your summer without having to watch the computer screen to make sure you are in the lead on a lot! Outbid notices can be emailed directly to you so you can keep up on all the bidding action.

This online auction is an important fundraising opportunity for the 2017 IBC. Take a few minutes and get your account set up and place your bids! If you have questions or need assistance with your account, please contact Karen at auctions@bradeenauction.com or call 605-381-3738. Bid early, bid often and good luck!

New Report Absolves Bison as Brucellosis Problem in Yellowstone

A new report issued this week by the National Research Council of the National Academies citing elk—not bison—as the cause of transmission of brucellosis to cattle in the Greater Yellowstone Area was greeted as welcome news by the National Bison Association, and private bison mangers in the region (See the official release below in *Weekly Update*).

“This report documents what we have been consistently saying over the past few years: bison are not the cause of the brucellosis problem in the Greater Yellowstone Area,” said Dr. Dave Hunter, chief veterinarian for Turner Enterprises, Inc., and chair of the NBA Science and Research Committee.”

Terry McElwain, Regents Professor in the Paul G. Allen School for Global Animal Health at Washington State University and chair of the committee that conducted the study and wrote the report, added, “One of the most significant changes in our understanding of brucellosis since 1998 is that the disease in the Yellowstone area can be traced genetically and epidemiologically to transmission from elk, not bison. Federal and state agencies should focus on controlling transmission from elk, including undertaking modeling efforts that can characterize and quantify the risk of brucellosis transmitting and spreading from and among elk.”

He added that, to manage brucellosis in a complex ecosystem like that of the GYA, stakeholders and experts across disciplines will need to coordinate and cooperate to understand the costs and benefits of actions taken to control the spread of brucellosis. The committee said it is critical to incorporate participation by leadership at highest levels of federal and state agencies in initiating and coordinating discussions and making decisions.

Entertainment at Every Turn of IBC

Attendees at the 2017 International Bison Conference, scheduled July 4th – 8th in Big Sky and surrounding areas in Montana will enjoy three evenings of musical entertainment following their days of educational and informational sessions.

Kicking off the July 4th celebration at the 320 Ranch near Big Sky will be the Michael Martin Murphy Trio Band. Murphy soared to fame in the country pop scene in the 1970's before turning his talents to more traditional western music. His early hits included Wildfire, and Carolina in the Pines, Over the past three decades, his songs have celebrated the West, and the role of the American rancher as stewards of the environment.

Murphy notes, "Real environmentalists are the men and women who spend their days working the land responsibly to ensure its health for generations to come."

On Wednesday evening, July 5th, conference attendees will be entertained by Wylie and the Wild West. Wylie Gustafson is an American Original. The gifted singer, songwriter, rancher, horseman, and the world-famous Yahoo!® yodeler leads the musical outfit known as Wylie & the Wild West. As one music writer sums it up: "Forget everything you hate about modern country, this guy is all old school cool without being a tired period piece."

Leo Downey, Jr. will close out the festivities, entertaining the closing banquet on July 7th with his unique blend of musical talent and storytelling, inspired in part by his own connection to the buffalo business. A native of California, Downey went to school in Iceland and then Singapore where in 1970 he began to seriously study the Spanish guitar, eventually this pursuit expanded to electric and steel string acoustic guitars. He returned to the states, and embarked on a successful musical career, He also began guiding people into this desert on vision quests, earned his wilderness guiding license and worked extensively as a volunteer on the California Condor Recovery Project. In 1998, Downey and his wife moved to the Canadian Rockies and began raising their family and a herd of buffalo.

Don't Miss Advertising Opportunities Offered for IBC Conference Program

Don't miss out on the opportunity to connect with the estimated 600 attendees at the upcoming International Bison Conference in Big Sky, MT. with one of the advertising options scheduled for the official conference program.

"We are producing a commemorative magazine for the IBC, and this is a great way for anyone connected with the bison business to get their message out to everyone attending," said Dave Carter, executive director of the National Bison Association. "As with past IBC programs, this publication will have a long shelf-life, with attendees taking it home as a souvenir of their Big Sky experience."

Advertising rates in the IBC Commemorative Program range for \$600 for a full-page, to \$125 for business card advertisements. Anyone interested in advertising should contact Dave Carter at david@bisoncentral.com.

Individuals and businesses signing up for sponsorships of \$2,500 and above will receive complimentary advertising in the program commensurate with the level of their sponsorship.

New Report Calls on Federal and State Collaboration to Address Brucellosis Transmission from Elk

(From National Academies of Science National Research Council)

WASHINGTON – Efforts to control brucellosis in the Greater Yellowstone Area (GYA) should focus on reducing the risk of transmission from elk, which are now viewed as the primary source of the infection in new cases occurring in cattle and domestic bison, says a new [report](#) by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. Federal, state, and tribal groups should work in a coordinated and transparent manner to address brucellosis in multiple areas and jurisdictions.

Brucellosis is found in cattle, bison, and elk and can result in late-gestation abortion, decreased milk production, and loss of fertility. Other animals can be infected by coming into contact with infectious materials (such as aborted fetuses or afterbirth), and *Brucellaabortus* – the bacterial pathogen that causes brucellosis – can spread to calves through nursing. *Brucellaabortus* is not considered a major public health threat in the U.S., but there are potential economic consequences. States must maintain brucellosis-free status, among other criteria, to sell live cattle.

Since the Academies' first [report](#) on brucellosis in the GYA issued in 1998, the disease has re-emerged in cattle and domestic bison herds in the region. Between 1998 and 2016, 22 cattle herds and five privately owned bison herds were affected in Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming; all other states in the U.S. are free of the disease.

“One of the most significant changes in our understanding of brucellosis since 1998 is that the disease in the Yellowstone area can be traced genetically and epidemiologically to transmission from elk, not bison,” said Terry McElwain, Regents Professor in the Paul G. Allen School for Global Animal Health at Washington State University and chair of the committee that conducted the study and wrote the report. “Federal and state agencies should focus on controlling transmission from elk, including undertaking modeling efforts that can characterize and quantify the risk of brucellosis transmitting and spreading from and among elk.”

To manage brucellosis in a complex ecosystem like that of the GYA, stakeholders and experts across disciplines will need to coordinate and cooperate to understand the costs and benefits of actions taken to control the spread of brucellosis. The committee said it is critical to incorporate participation by leadership at highest levels of federal and state agencies in initiating and coordinating discussions and making decisions.

The infected elk populations have spread beyond the traditionally accepted boundaries of the GYA. In addition to the challenges of locating them, there is no effective brucellosis vaccine for elk, unlike for cattle and bison. In the past, the National Park Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, members of local tribal groups, and the three GYA states worked together to manage the risk of transmission from wild bison to domestic cattle and bison. A similar joint effort is needed to reduce transmission of brucellosis between elk and livestock.

Under a 2010 interim rule to regionalize brucellosis control, the three GYA states created designated surveillance areas (DSAs) to monitor the disease in specific zones and to reduce the economic impact in unaffected areas. Brucellosis has been detected outside the original DSAs, resulting in expansion of surveillance boundaries.

Currently, there is lack of uniformity in rules and standards in detecting infected cattle, which has resulted in an uneven approach to surveillance and setting boundaries that accurately reflect risk. If DSA boundaries are not expanded in a timely manner in response to wildlife

cases of brucellosis, there is an increased probability that exposed or infected livestock may not be detected in time to prevent the further spread of infection as they are marketed and moved across the country. The committee recommended establishing uniform risk-based standards for expanding surveillance boundaries in response to finding brucellosis in wildlife.

To make timely and data-driven decisions for reducing the risk of brucellosis, the committee also recommended federal and state agencies adopt an active adaptive management approach – a decision-making process to reduce uncertainty of outcomes over time. This approach should include hypothesis testing and mandated periodic scientific assessments that would equip the responsible entities with the necessary information to make decisions for managing brucellosis transmission.

[Source](#)

http://www8.nationalacademies.org/onpinews/newsitem.aspx?RecordID=24750&_ga=2.238950018.303836934.1496261068-1753535159.1496261068

Bison Mom Protects Newborn Calf from Coyote Attack in Yellowstone

(From Fox 31)

A newborn bison at Yellowstone National Park quickly learned how dangerous the world can be. A coyote tried to attack the bison calf before it could even stand, park [officials said on Facebook](#).

Last week, immediately after a cow bison gave birth, the coyote went in for the kill. Park ranger Joy Duffy captured images of the attack but did not intervene, [which is park policy](#). “The cow was worn out from giving birth and the calf was unable to stand yet,” park officials said.

Officials said the coyote was “very determined,” but the cow bison protected her calf until the coyote eventually gave up.

Park officials noted “all three appeared to be exhausted from the interaction.” Multiple people questioned why park officials didn’t try to stop the attack or help the cow and her calf.

“Death is an unpleasant, but necessary, part of nature,” park officials responded. “Yellowstone is not a zoo or an animal park. It can be difficult to watch nature take its course, especially when young animals are involved.”

Read more. <http://kdvr.com/2017/05/31/bison-mom-protects-newborn-calf-from-coyote-attack-in-yellowstone/>

White Bison Springs into Hays Herd

(From The Hays Daily News)

The newest addition to the city’s buffalo herd made her debut Thursday morning to the delight of a small crowd at Frontier Park.

Officially, she’s known as No. 4, the number on her ear tag, but city parks employees dubbed the white bison heifer “Ghostbuster.”

Just before 10 a.m., Brent Ginther and his family arrived from Rexford with the bison in a trailer and allowed the crowd a glimpse of her before driving around to an entrance at the 9.5-acre pen's north side.

One of the city's four female bison is expected to begin calving today, so the bull — who also came from Ginther Farms — has been separated from them.

They seemed to know something was happening, clustering together and watching the truck closely as it entered the pen and maneuvered into a position so the spectators could see the release.

The heifer, who had been in the trailer since the night before due to rain expected in the Rexford area, leaped out as the door was opened. She chased the cows as they began to run.

After several minutes of running around the east section of the pen, they all stopped and approached one another with tails slightly lifted, which is an alert signal, Ginther said. The four females and the white heifer then began to sniff noses and get acquainted.

Brent Ginther said he offered to bring the heifer because he thought it would be a good attraction to Hays. In addition to the bull, the city has purchased heifers from the Gintners in the past.

"We've had a good working relationship with these guys and we just thought we'd bring it down," he said.

Read more. http://www.hdnews.net/news/white-bison-springs-into-hays-herd/article_fa6c5d3a-8a53-594b-aba2-da2dc05d56e9.html

Recent find in Stanton County provides 10,300-year-old window in time

(From High Plains Public Radio)

A window in time has been discovered in Stanton County, Kansas, one that dates back some 10,000 years and involves bison and Paleoindians, Native Americans' ancient ancestors.

As [The Wichita Eagle](#) reports, in 2002, an archaeology team from the University of Kansas dug out a portion of Bear Creek in Stanton County that revealed bison skeleton, all bunched up shoulder to shoulder, stretching nearly half the length of a football field.

What was found provided a window in time that points to human daring.

It is believed the Paleoindians, who 103 years ago predated bows and arrows, killed the bison — in a group of 10 to 30 people that included grandmas and kids — from not much more than arm's length away, likely with spears.

A geoarchaeologist and anthropologist from the KU group believe the Paleontians would follow bison and creep up on them when they stopped at watering holes.

It was a dangerous prospect, as bison can quickly become aggressive, but the ancients are believed to have used the element of surprise to ambush the herd.

Source. <http://hpr.org/post/recent-find-stanton-county-provides-10300-year-old-window-time>

Public Comment Period Extended on Grand Canyon Bison Plan

(From US News & World Report)

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. (AP) — The National Park Service has extended the length of a public comment period on a plan to reduce the number of bison found near the Grand Canyon's North Rim through lethal and nonlethal means.

The comment period is now scheduled to run through June 14.

The goal is to bring down the number of bison from 400 to 600 to fewer than 200 through lethal culling by trained volunteers and capturing and removing them.

If the herd is not reduced, the Park Service says it could grow to nearly 800 bison in the next three years and to as large as 1,200 to 1,500 within 10 years.

Officials say the bison are trampling vegetation, grazing in pristine meadows and polluting water sources within Grand Canyon National Park.

Source. <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/arizona/articles/2017-05-30/public-comment-period-extended-on-grand-canyon-bison-plan>

Oregon Conservation Innovation Grants on Forest Stand Resiliency

(From USDA News Release)

USDA-NRCS in Oregon has announced that a total of \$150,000 is available to businesses, universities, state and local governments, Tribes, and individuals for Forest Stand Resiliency CIGs. Applicants may request up to \$75,000, and in return match those funds on a dollar-for-dollar basis. Possible grant topics may include fire management, new methods of assessing forest health on private lands or developing conservation strategies to promote forest stand resiliency against weather extremes.

Forest Stand Resiliency CIG projects must involve farmers, ranchers or non-industrial timber owners who meet the eligibility criteria for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Projects must occur in Oregon and may be county-based or statewide in scope.

The deadline to submit grant proposals is July 7, 2017.

Read more.

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/or/newsroom/releases/?cid=NRCSEPRD1330481>

Guide on Managing Risks of Interns and Volunteers Available Online

(From Farm Commons)

Farm Commons has released a free, online guide titled *Managing Risks of Interns and Volunteers*. Employment laws that apply to interns, apprentices, and volunteers may include obligations to provide minimum wage, pay workers' compensation, and contribute payroll taxes--depending on whether state or federal agricultural labor exemptions apply. This guide explains the laws behind interns and volunteers, and it can help farmers better understand and manage the legal risks of having interns and volunteers working on farms.

Learn more here. <https://farmcommons.org/resources-search>

There Aren't Enough Slaughterhouses to Support the Farm-to-Table Economy

(From Bloomberg/Businessweek)

Everything at Blue Hill at Stone Barns in Pocantico Hills, N.Y., has a story. Servers, chefs, and farmers at the restaurant, which was [recently ranked No. 11 in the world](#), are there to tell it to anyone with a few hundred dollars, several hours, and a reservation.

Depending on the day's menu, the braised pork belly may come from red wattle pigs, prized by Chef Dan Barber for their high fat content. At one point during a recent meal, a diner's candle was extinguished and poured over plates as a sauce, because—surprise: The candle was made of beef tallow. It's likely the only fine dining establishment where a trip to the manure shed is as coveted as dessert. All are part and parcel of the Blue Hill at Stone Barns experience.

Farm-to-table restaurants usually skip over just one small detail during these dramatic narratives. It's arguably the most important step in the process, but few people want to think about slaughter when they're cutting into their dinner.

It's also often cited as the most difficult. Despite ever-increasing customer demand for noncommodity meat, there aren't enough slaughterhouses to keep up. It's a major hitch in the supply chain—keeping supplies down, prices up, and making the already grueling job of farming even harder.

Phil Haynes is the assistant livestock manager at the Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture, the open-to-the-public farm and education hub that supplies many of Blue Hill's ingredients. On a freezing March morning, he awoke before sunrise and drove four red wattles about an hour and 15 minutes to Dealaman Enterprises, Inc. in Warren, N.J. With the help of a Dealaman staffer, Haynes led the animals into a dark barn filled with the rank odor of fresh manure, before heading back to work. He'd make the same journey the next day, only then he'd return to Stone Barns with the carcasses.

Between Haynes's trips, the animals met their fate in a small room so clean and brightly lit that a single smear of guts on the white wall seems out of place, though neat piles of them sit on the floor. In a process that takes about 30 minutes per pig, the animal is stunned, slaughtered, scalded, and eviscerated. Various innards are sorted appropriately—livers on a spike, lungs in a garbage pail.

Even at Blue Hill, which exemplifies the aspirational closed-loop, farm-to-table meal, slaughter of pigs and sheep requires a trip off premises. Under USDA regulations, farm staff must take these animals to a federally inspected facility to serve it at the restaurant or sell it at the Stone Barns store, though an exemption for small amounts of poultry staying in the state allows them to slaughter their chickens, turkeys, and ducks in an on-site, state-certified facility.

Full Story:

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-05-23/there-aren-t-enough-slaughterhouses-to-support-the-farm-to-table-economy>

Administration Announces Plans to Renegotiate NAFTA

The Office of the United States Trade Representative this week published a notice in the Federal Register that the Trump administration **intends** to commence negotiations with Canada and Mexico regarding modernization of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

According to the Federal Register notice, “The NAFTA was negotiated more than 25 years ago, and, while our economy and U.S. businesses have changed considerably over that period, NAFTA has not. The United States seeks to support higher-paying jobs in the United States and to grow the U.S. economy by improving U.S. opportunities under NAFTA.”

Written comments on this public notice may be submitted by Monday, June 12th through the Federal Rulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments in part 3 below. For alternatives to on-line submissions, please contact Yvonne Jamison, Trade Policy Staff Committee, at (202) 395–3475.