



National Bison Association

8690 Wolff Court, Suite 200 Westminster, CO 80031-3646
www.BisonCentral.com Phone: 303-292-2833 Fax: 303-845-9081

Weekly Update from the National Bison Association

A news and update service *exclusively* for members of the National Bison Association.
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November 4, 2016

National Bison Day Tomorrow

Celebrations are being held around the United States this weekend to celebrate National Bison Day, November 5th.

The National Bison Day was established once again by the United States Senate, under a resolution sponsored by U.S. Sen Michael Enzi (R-WY) The annual observance provides an opportunity for private, public and tribal bison interests to promote the new National Mammal.

“National Bison Day comes at a great time for our business,” said Dave Carter, executive director of the National Bison Association. Across the country, livestock producers are working their herds, and assessing the outlook for their sectors. The strength and stability of the bison business is capturing their attention.

“And, National Bison Day comes as consumers are starting to consider their Holiday entertaining menus. That’s an opportunity to get their interest in featuring bison at meals when friends and family gather over the next couple of months.”

See stories elsewhere in Weekly Update for news on individual Bison Day celebrations.

Anderson Speaks at Wind Cave Bison Ceremony

National Bison Association Board Chair Bruce Anderson of Rapid City, SD, was among the speakers at a November 1st ceremony at Wind Cave National Park in South Dakota honoring bison as the new National Mammal

The ceremony celebrated the role of Wind Cave in helping to restore bison on public lands at the beginning of the last century.

Wind Cave Park Superintendent Vidal Davila told the crowd, “In 1911, the American Bison Society was searching for lands to which to reestablish a bison herd in the midst of the Great Plains. The open grasslands of the park attracted the Society to this area.”

“Fourteen buffalo were transported from the Bronx Zoo to Wind Cave National Park in 1913. Their relocation was part of a nationwide effort to ‘bring back the bison’,” he said.

Anderson joined U.S. Rep. Kristi Noem, and InterTribal Buffalo Council Director Jim Stone in addressing the gathering.

“There was a group of 4th graders at the ceremony, so I directed my comments to them,” Anderson said afterwards. “I told them that I was in fourth grade when I saw How the West Was Won, and remember being proud that the buffalo scenes were filmed at Custer State Park. That made a lifelong impression on me. I hoped that being at Wind Cave to celebrate our national mammal would make a similar impression on them.”

EU Agrees to Canadian Trade Agreement

Canada and the European Union took a step closer to eliminating the tariff on Canadian bison shipments to Europe last week, as Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau travelled to Brussels to sign the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement that was negotiated two years ago.

Ratification of the agreement had been threatened recently after one small province in Belgium listed objections to the accord. Under the rules of the European Commission, agreements require unanimous approval of all member-states. And Belgium requires unanimous approval from all its provinces.

That dispute, however, appears to have been rectified, which will allow Belgium to support the agreement.

Formal ratification is still required by the European Parliament and the legislatures in each EU member country, but Mr. Trudeau and EU leaders held a ceremonial signing of CETA on Sunday as a show of support for the deal which is more far-reaching than any other trade agreement

All shipments of U.S. bison to the EU will continue to be subject to a 20 percent tariff. The U.S. and the EU are in the midst of negotiating a new comprehensive trade agreement, and the American negotiators have agreed to include an elimination of the tariff in their proposals.

NBA Seeks FFA Sponsors to Spread the Bison Advantage

Last week, the NBA sent an email to several members requesting their support in sponsoring an FFA chapter under the association’s student group membership program.

Today, many members will be receiving an email asking them to sponsor an individual student as a member of the NBA for one year.

Several individual high school students stopping by our booth at the FFA convention in October expressed a strong interest in considering bison as their career path,” said NBA Director Dave Carter. “We told those students that we would try to connect them with a nearby NBA member who could help introduce them to our business.

“If you receive an email today headed, ‘Help Us Introduce a Student in Your Area to the Bison Advantage,’ please read and respond,” he said.

NBA members can sponsor an individual student for \$50. The student then receives our new *Bison Producers’ Handbook*, the *Insiders’ Guide* DVD, *Bison World* magazine and access to the association’s on-line resources. The sponsor also agrees to mentor the student by inviting them to their farm, or through other activities.

If interested in sponsoring an individual student, or an FFA Chapter, please email david@bisoncentral.com, or call 303.292.2833.

Reserve Winter Conference Lodging Soon

NBA members should have received an email this week encouraging you to reserve your Winter Conference lodging soon by calling the hotel at 303-399-7500 and requesting the National Bison Association room block. The National Bison Association room block is over 35% sold out already, and we do typically sell out our block, which offers discounted rates to attendees.

The NBA will return to the Denver-Stapleton Renaissance Hotel for this year's conference. The hotel is conveniently located minutes from the National Western Stock Show as well as Denver International Airport. There is a free shuttle to and from the airport, as well as to the National Western Stock Show. The hotel is offering the highly discounted rate of \$134/night with a hot buffet breakfast for two. Those opting for lodging without the breakfast buffet pay \$124/night (note - the NBA does not provide breakfast at the conference). Make your reservations today by calling 303-399-7500 and requesting the National Bison Association room block. Get your room early, our block has sold out in the past. Any questions, please give us a call at the office at (303) 292-2833, or email jim@bisoncentral.com.

Carter Named to CO Food Advisory Council

Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper has named NBA Executive Director Dave Carter to the Colorado Food Systems Advisory Council (CFSAC), a panel that was created by the state legislature in 2010 to strengthen healthy food access for all Coloradans through Colorado agriculture and local food systems and economies.

The COFSAC is the state conduit for hearing, reviewing, and advancing critical food systems issue in which state government does or could play a role.

The Council is comprised of fifteen appointees representing a broad spectrum of government and non-government entities. The members represent most sectors of the food system and allow for a council very diverse in background and experience.

NRCS Helps Buffalo Ranchers with Rotational Grazing

(From Farm Progress)

Michael and Amy Billings know where their buffalo roam. They control where, too.

It is all part of a rotational grazing system at their farm. The couple, who own Buffalo Lodge along with Ryan Dunn, began working with NRCS in 2011. At the time, they had a herd of 25 buffalo roaming 80 acres, but they were looking for a better way to more effectively use the forage on their farm. Working with the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Billingses were able to design and gain partial funding for a rotational grazing system at their farm and event venue, near the boundary of Johnson and Cass counties in western Missouri. The couple soon acquired another 105 acres, and used NRCS and Johnson County Soil and Water Conservation District assistance to install cross-fencing, a livestock water distribution system, tire tanks and pasture seeding — including conversion of some acres to native warm-season forages. Today, they are up to 100 buffalo, which rotate through 17 paddocks on 185 acres.

Group grazing

"We split the buffalo into two herds on opposite ends of the farm, and rotate them counterclockwise," Michael says. "The flow has worked very well."

He moves the buffalo to the next pasture every couple of days, giving pastures plenty of time to rest before the other herd comes around. It's good for the grass, and it seems to satisfy the bison's' natural instinct to stick close together and roam as a group.

Read more. <http://farmprogress.com/story-nrcs-helps-buffalo-ranchers-rotational-grazing-9-148410>

National Bison Day Marks America's New National Mammal

(From The Capital Press)

And this week is a time for emphasizing the new status of buffalo, or bison. (The official name for the Plains bison, in fact, sounds like a cheer from fans of a certain nearby university: Bison Bison Bison. Very scientific.

For the fourth year in a row, the Senate has declared National Bison Day as the first Saturday in November. So this week, leading up to Nov. 5, is one of is what has become week of and South Dakota has more of them than any other

Making buffalo the national mammal and holding a National Bison Day only highlights what American Indians have been doing for hundreds of years or more, says Jim Stone. He's executive director of the InterTribal Buffalo Council, based in Rapid City, but representing 62 or more tribes in 19 states.

Eight Indian tribes based in South Dakota have herds that total about 3,000 head, Stone said, plus hundreds more buffalo on tribal lands owned by individuals, nonprofit communities or tribal colleges.

"We are doing all we can to bring them back and manage them as wild herds, bringing them back to tribal lands, for the culture," Stone told the Capital Journal on Monday. "We are working

to get buffalo meat back in our diet, distributing it to tribal members and some of the tribes have it in school lunch programs.”

The ITBC's efforts are part of a much larger national agenda promoting buffalo through the American Bison Coalition of 60 groups, including producers and the ITBC and individual herd owners and other organizations. It's a bipartisan deal, something Republicans and Democrats agree on during a politically divisive time.

Read more. http://www.capjournal.com/news/national-bison-day-marks-america-s-new-national-mammal/article_2b04da9e-9ff2-11e6-85d1-63d1014483a9.html

Ancient Bison Skeleton Finds Home in Jamestown

(From the Jamestown Tribune)

JAMESTOWN — The National Buffalo Museum in Jamestown is now home to "Samantha," a complete bison skeleton that is estimated to be 8,000 to 10,000 years old.

Samantha is one of two complete bison skeletons that were found beneath the Snake River Farm owned by Tom and Gail Barthel. The area in Sherburne County, Minn., southeast of St. Cloud, is in the Anoka Sand Plain that was created by sand deposits of receding glaciers around 12,000 years ago.

Samantha was first assembled in 1998. It is a mature cow skeleton with a 28-inch horn span and measures about 6 feet tall at the hump. That is about 25 percent larger than modern bison, with a horn core over 50 percent larger, Tom Barthel said.

“Sam” was on display for several years at the Becker (Minn.) Public Library, where Gail is employed, and then at the Sherburne County Courthouse in Elk River, Minn.

“It needed to have a permanent home someplace,” Tom said about why they brought the skeleton to Jamestown. “It’s a little big for the living room, and it ought to be someplace where people can see it.”

Tom said he visited the Smithsonian Institution and other museums to learn how ancient skeletons are assembled for exhibition. He learned about building displays and using glues along with sealants to protect the old bones.

“It’s just been a lot of fun,” Gail said. “Kids bring their parents and grandparents, and when they see it from the window outside they want to come in.”

The process to bring Samantha to Jamestown began when Gail met Ilana Xinos, executive director of the National Buffalo Museum. The two were attending the National Bison Association conference in Denver earlier this year. Tom is a board member of the organization.

Read more. http://bismarcktribune.com/news/state-and-regional/ancient-bison-skeleton-finds-home-in-jamestown/article_c689be6e-6e06-5058-86ba-61b53b6de031.html

Bison Roam Indiana Prairie

(From The Chicago Tribune)

As a herd of bison grazes on a small hilltop, spectators recorded the scene with their cellphones and examined them with binoculars.

"I love nature and it's remarkable to have bison so close to home," said Veronica Bohlin, of Morocco.

Five months after President Barack Obama signed a law making the bison the country's first national mammal, a herd of 23 now roams the prairie at Kankakee Sands in Morocco, just south of Lake County on US 41.

The bison arrived last week after spending 10 years at a Nature Conservancy preserve in South Dakota. Many of the tens of thousands of bison in the United States are preserved in national parks, said Ted Anchor, site manager of Kankakee Sands.

It's something to be proud of," Anchor said. "To have this historical animal that means so much to the country's history is big."

The bison will help manage the land by eating grass, thinning out trees and churning the soil.

"The bison are here as land managers and help with the restoration process of the land," Anchor said.

Their arrival has generated a lot of interest, including more than 500,000 views of a 10-second video on the Nature Conservancy in Indiana Facebook page showing the bison being released on Kankakee Sands..

"Everyone is coming out of the woodwork," Anchor said. "It's incredible how many people are coming out here. It's just amazing how many people would not even consider coming out here but now the bison are bringing out families."

Read more. <http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/post-tribune/news/ct-ptb-the-bison-are-here-st-1026-20161028-story.html>

Caprock Canyon Plans Bison Day Celebration

Caprock Canyon State Park in Texas is planning a celebration tomorrow to celebrate National Bison Day, and to honor bison as the new National Mammal of the United States.

"Bison and people have always had a longstanding relationship with each other in what is now Caprock Canyons State Park. From its ancient archeological site to the picturesque scene of the Official Bison Herd of the state of Texas leisurely grazing on its prairies, Caprock Canyons State Park holds the key to understanding the role of bison both in the past and in the present," the Park's website notes.

"Join us as we celebrate this magnificent animal on National Bison Day, Saturday, November 5th. Beginning at 2:00 p.m. in the park Visitor's Center Pavilion, the Texas State Bison Herdsman will present a presentation on the Texas State Bison Herd.

“Learn about the herd’s significance, their turbulent past, and what’s in store for the future of the Texas State Bison Herd from the man who has been with them since their adoption within the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and Caprock Canyons State Park.”

The President Who Saved the American Bison

(From Scientific American)

As the United States turned 100 on July 4, 1876, Theodore Roosevelt was nearing a milestone birthday of his own. Only a few months shy of 18, he’d seen his nation fulfill its original promise, maturing into a more functional form of democratic governance, perhaps most plainly—and painfully—reflected in the civil war that redefined the principles of freedom.

As the nation tried to recover from the scars of its bloody conflict, across the continent the forces of territorial expansion had also taken their own toll on all things indigenous to the nation, from native peoples to the land and wildlife they depended upon.

At the time of Theodore Roosevelt’s birth on October 27, 1858, the population density of people and bison of the United States averaged roughly 10 and 17 per square mile, respectively. Only 42 years later,, upon Roosevelt’s election as vice president in 1900, there were about 25 people per square mile and bison were nearly extinct.

The decimation of this great mammal—the continent’s largest—from some 40 million to barely a thousand animals is tragedy on a staggering scale motivated by unrestrained resource exploitation for commercial purposes and misguided U.S. Indian policy

Theodore was a 7th generation Roosevelt of wealth and privilege, and enjoyed a resource rich environment that enabled him to explore nature from a more romantic viewpoint than most people living at that time. Perhaps as a consequence, he developed a significant fascination with American Bison. This fascination increased as he grew older, gained power, and enthusiastically pursued his interests as a hunter-conservationist and naturalist.

The American Bison, or buffalo as it was commonly known, symbolized the wild nature and western culture Roosevelt had come to love in his travels as a young man. He hunted and killed his first bison in 1883 at the age of 24 in Montana at Little Cannonball Creek. After the kill he danced enthusiastically around that buffalo to celebrate his success.

Read more. <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/quest-blog/the-president-who-saved-the-american-bison/>

Bison Herd Released One Year Ago Has Expanded

(From Denver 9News)

FORT COLLINS - One year ago 10 American bison were released on northern Colorado public lands. Since then the herd has expanded and there are now healthy animals.

The Laramie Foothills Bison Conservation Herd galloped onto 1,000 acres at Soapstone Prairie Natural Area and Red Mountain Open Space on Nov. 1, 2015.

The project has contributed valuable heirloom genetics to two other bison conservation efforts. The goal is to return the iconic species to

The Laramie Foothills Bison Conservation Herd represents the wellspring of heritage genetics found in and around Yellowstone National Park. With help from a scientific workaround it's free from brucellosis, an infectious disease that plagues bison in the Greater Yellowstone Area and typically prevents the animals and their diverse genetics from moving beyond those geographic confines.

The bison have adapted well to their home at Soapstone Prairie Natural Area and Red Mountain Open Space – proved when six fuzzy bison calves were born unassisted last spring and early summer.

Read more. <http://www.9news.com/news/local/features/bison-herd-released-one-year-ago-has-expanded/346381856>

NCBA, Farm Bureau Among Groups Filing Brief in WOTUS Challenge *(From AgriPulse)*

The [National Cattlemen's Beef Association](#) and the [Public Lands Council](#), along with other industry and municipal stakeholders, filed their opening [brief](#) Tuesday in a lawsuit asking that the controversial “waters of the U.S. rule” be invalidated.

In a joint release, NCBA and the PLC said the brief details how the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers disregarded the statutory and constitutional limits of federal authority, lobbied on their own rule-making, and failed to craft a rule that meets the rigors of the law.

“Cattlemen and women have long asked for clarity in the Clean Water Act, yet this rule adds subjectivity,” NCBA President Tracy Brunner said in the release. “By violating fundamental tenets of administrative law and expanding jurisdiction well beyond the text and structure of the Clean Water Act, it is very clear the WOTUS rulemaking was flawed from start.” Other groups signing the brief, which was filed with the U.S. 6th Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati, include the American Farm Bureau Federation, the National Corn Growers Association, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and a long list of farm and commodity groups.

PLC President Dave Eliason said WOTUS is just one example of the onslaught of regulations that rural America is facing.

“Regulatory overreach is becoming the norm for farmers, ranchers and small businesses across the country, hampering economic growth and threatening the stability of many rural communities,” said Eliason. “Unfortunately, because Congress has repeatedly failed to act on this issue, we are fighting the legal battle to keep this rule from being implemented.”

Get Your Beards Ready for National Bison Day

(From Indian Country Today Media Network)

Once nearly extinct, the National Bison Legacy Act, designating the iconic animal as the United States national mammal was signed by President Barack Obama on May 9, 2016. Recognizing the bison as the national mammal was an important step for tribes.

“The recognition of the buffalo as the [national mammal](#) shows the cross-cultural stature of this iconic animal and for tribes will allow us to expand our work on reintroducing buffalo into our day to day lives,” said Jim Stone, executive director of the Inter Tribal Buffalo Council, in a statement from the [Wildlife Conservation Society](#) after the bill had made its way through Congress. “The buffalo has had a special place in the lives of tribal people since time immemorial and played important roles in our culture, religion and lifestyle. Now buffalo have become a part of the fabric of tribal life once again, created the foundation for an economic movement based on healthy food choices and provided conservation groups opportunities to expand the habitat for the species.”

Now, we are nearly upon National Bison Day, which has been passed by the U.S. Senate four years in a row and designated as the first Saturday in November, which falls on the 5th this year.

“National Bison Day has become an annual celebration of the ecological, cultural, historical and economic contribution of the U.S. national mammal, the American bison. Similar resolutions were passed in 2013, 2014 and 2015,” says the [National Bison Association](#). “Native American tribes, bison producers, conservationists, zoos, sportsmen and women, educators and other public and private partners commemorate the National Bison Day by hosting events celebrating bison in their communities in dozens of states and participating on social media.”

One social media campaign is [Beards for Bison](#), in which participants can either grow and showcase their own beard or print one and post a picture of themselves with #BeardsforBison to celebrate the iconic animal.

Keith Aune, WCS Senior Conservationist and Bison Program Director, noted how special this year has been for the bison. “This year’s National Bison Day will be extra meaningful as we now recognize bison as our national mammal. Bison have been part of the American landscape for many thousands of years and have shaped the ecological function of the Great Plains.” Stone agreed, saying that: “Once again, Indian country is looking forward to celebrate National Bison Day as a testament to the iconic nature of the bison. Now as a national symbol, the standing of the bison in the eyes of the country is ever increasing and is fulfilling the dreams of tribal communities.”

Read more. <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2016/11/02/get-your-beards-ready-national-bison-day-166320>

30 Alberta Ranches Quarantined After Case Of Bovine TB Discovered

(From The Calgary Herald)

Thirty ranches in southeast Alberta have been quarantined after the discovery of a single case of bovine tuberculosis, and the quarantine order could spread as the Canadian Food Inspection Agency continues its investigation.

In late September, the United States Department of Agriculture notified the CFIA that a case of bovine TB had been detected in a cow from Alberta when it was slaughtered in the United States. That cow was traced to a farm near Jenner, Alberta, approximately 50 km northeast of Brooks.

Bovine TB is a reportable disease in Canada and has been subject to a mandatory national eradication program since 1923. While Canada is considered to be officially free of bovine TB today, isolated cases may occur.

The CFIA is now making contact with all cattle producers in Newell County, Special Area No. 2, Special Area No. 3, Acadia No. 34, and Cypress County to attempt to identify animals that may have been exposed to the disease, either at individual ranches or at the Buffalo-Atlee and Suffield Block community pastures.

Producers in the general investigation area that have not been contacted by the CFIA are allowed to move animals and send cattle to auction markets and feedlots but must comply with livestock identification requirements. Premises that have been placed under quarantine are forbidden from moving animals without permission.

Read more. <http://tinyurl.com/h6llsff>

New York Farm Viability Grants

New York Farm Viability Institute is accepting proposals for grants up to \$150,000, for projects that help New York farms become more economically viable. Eligible grant applicants include farmer groups, researchers, educators, organizations, agencies and businesses. Applicants may represent nonprofit or for-profit sectors.

Projects must work with New York State resident farmers and outcomes must benefit agriculture in New York State. Priorities are projects that improve operational practices, foster industry-wide innovation, incubate new ideas, increase routes to market and improve marketing practices, and develop human capital.

Applications are due by November 10, 2016.

Read more. <http://www.nyfvi.org/default.aspx?PageID=2261>

South Dakota National Organic Program Certification Cost-Share

This program administered by the South Dakota Department of Agriculture will reimburse applicants with NOP certified organic producers and processors operating within South Dakota for 75% of the cost associated with certification or re-certification to the National Organic Program, up to \$750.

Reimbursements will be provided on a first-come first, first-serve basis until funds are depleted.

Application deadline is November 11, 2016.

<http://sdda.sd.gov/grants/national-organic-program-grant/>