

EXHIBIT LO

DATE 3-21-13

SB 256



# FREE ROAMING BISON!



*Dustin & Vicki Hofeldt*

406.357.2997

Chinook, Montana

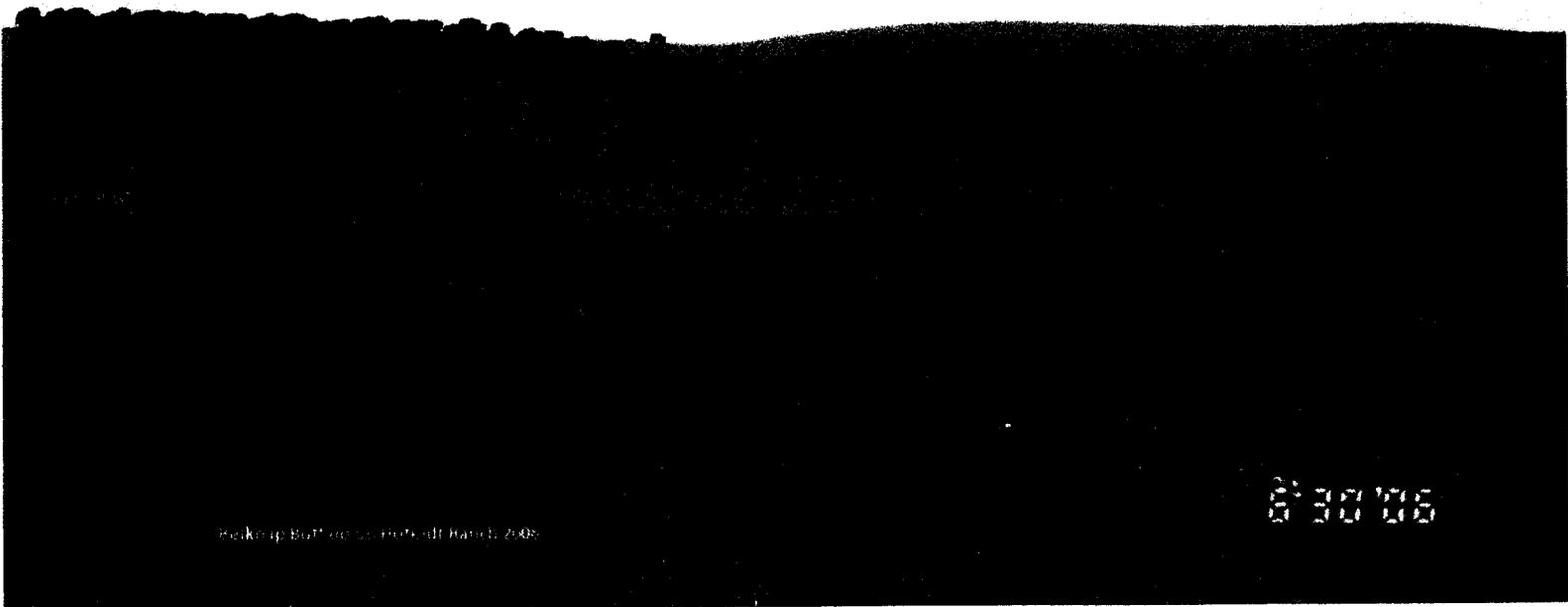
email: [beefherder@hotmail.com](mailto:beefherder@hotmail.com)

Montana Department of Livestock Production, 1000 North Central Expressway, Helena, MT 59617, (406) 442-2222

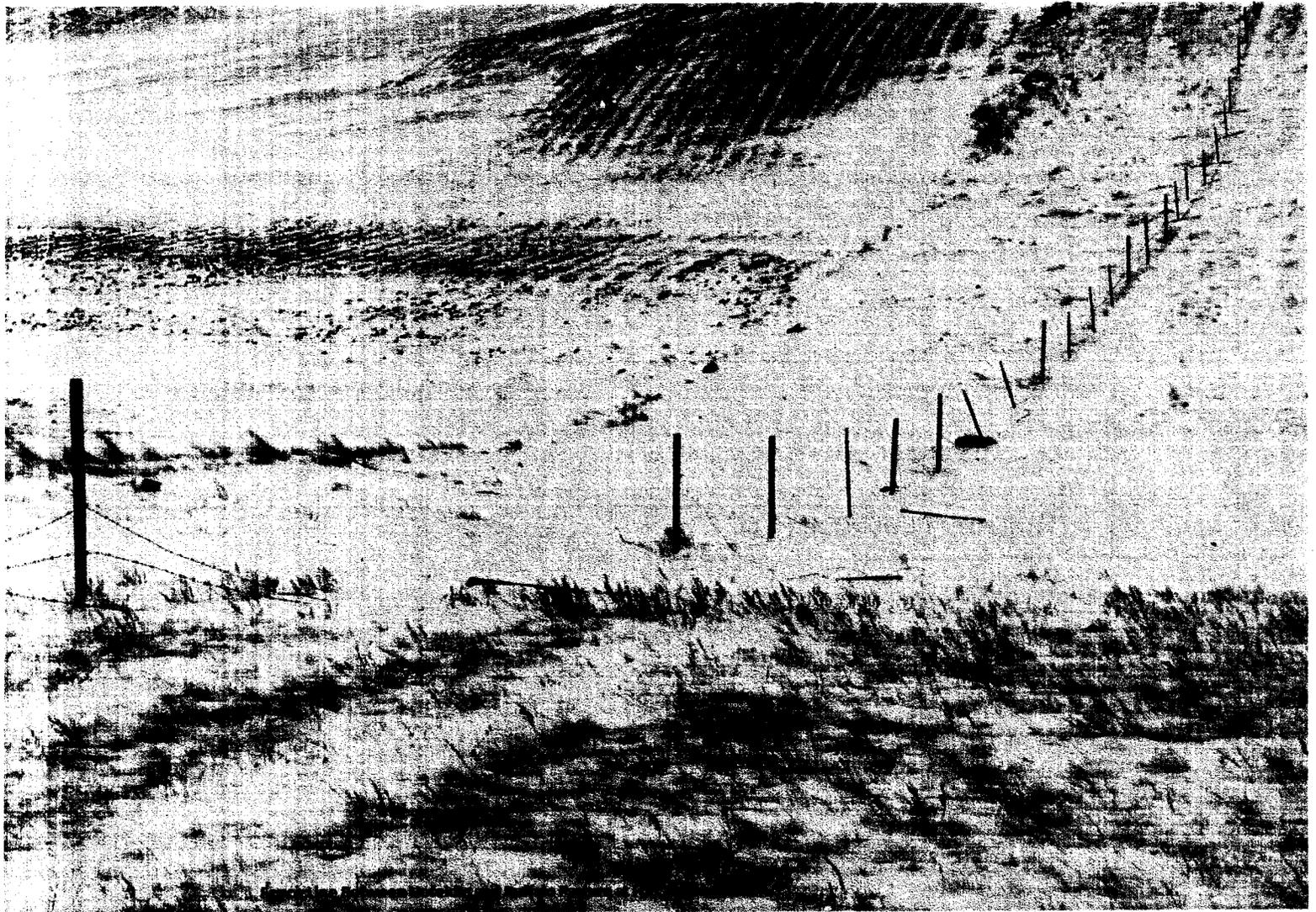
Problems with the Fort Belknaps domestic bison herd has been ongoing since the late 1970's when Dustin's grandpa purchased our ranch that borders the reservation. There were repeated outbreaks in the year 2004, when I began to document them. The photos in the documentation I am giving you are only a few incidences.



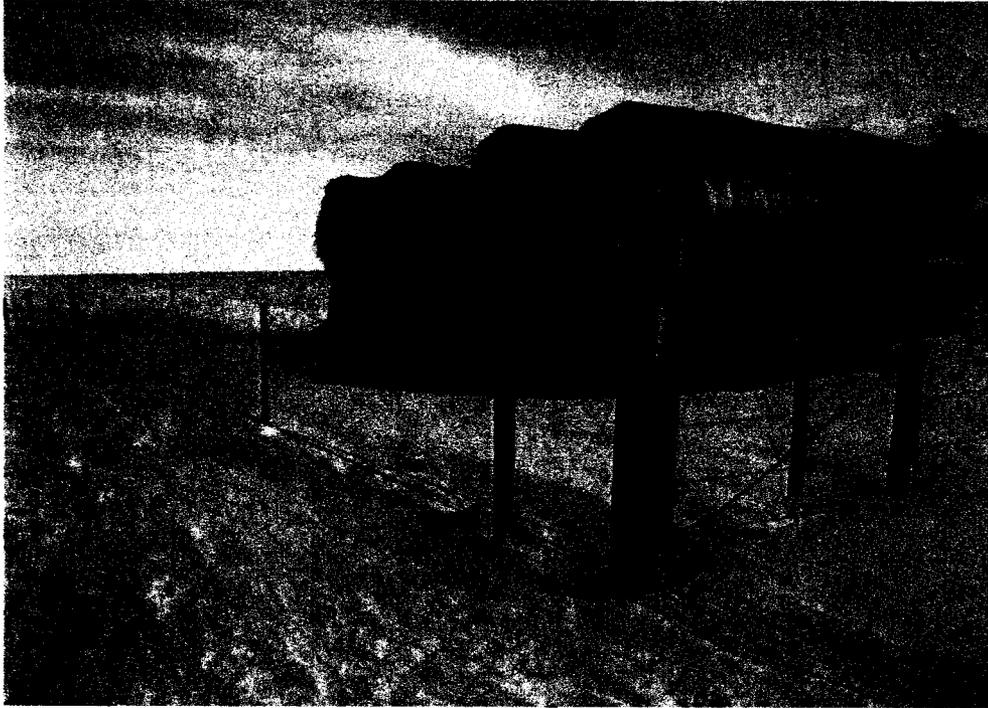
This is a picture of the Fort Belknaps bison on our private land approximately 3 miles off of the reservation in 2004. After they figured out where Dustin was feeding his cows at they would return about 3 days after being ran back to the reservation, this continued on all winter long.



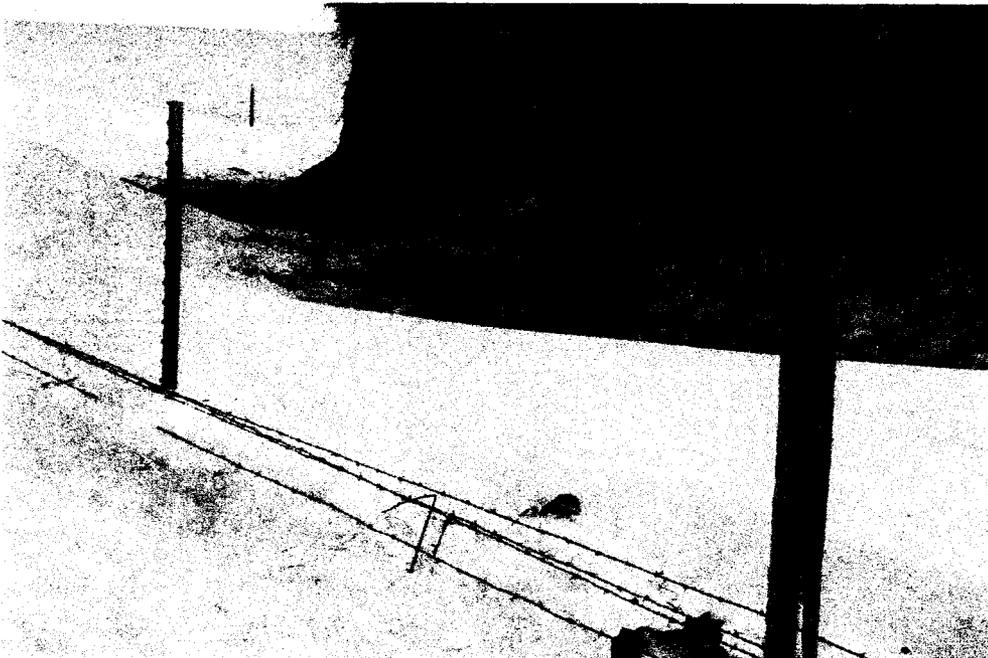
This is a photo on our private land in June of 2006. The pickup you see is Fort Belknaps Fish and Game department returning them to the reservation. This goes to show we also have problems in the summer with them also. Dustins grandpa went to this pasture to fix the bison breaks in the fence, and had a heart attack on the fenceline and died.



This is the fenceline between us and Fort Belknap after their entire herd broke out because they were in search of something to eat. As you can see, fenceposts aren't something that is going to stop these powerful animals.



Vicki and Dustin Hofeldts haystack; fence tore down by the buffalo



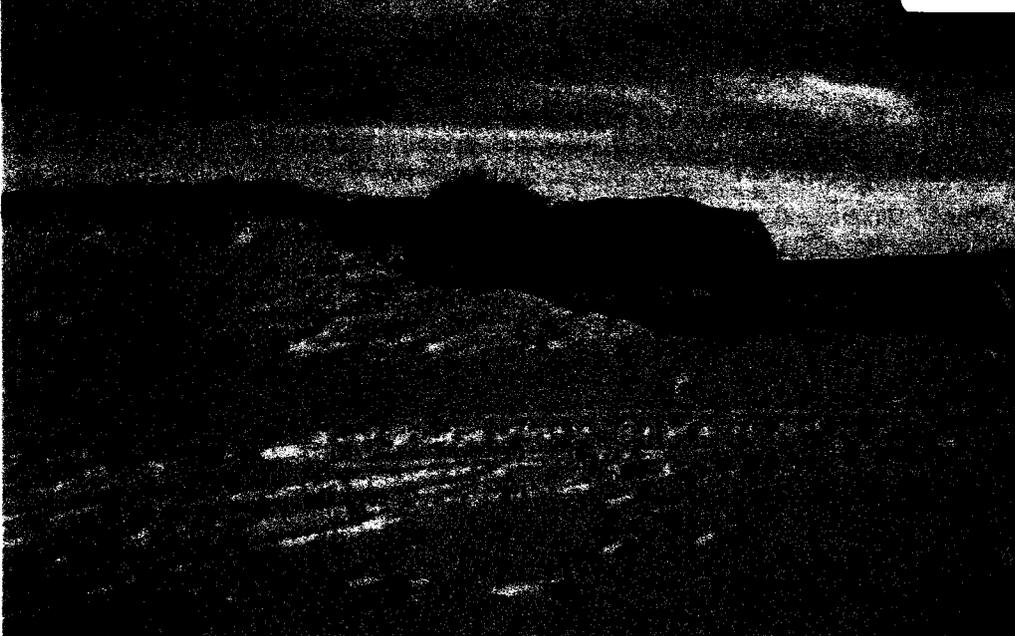
These pictures and report were from the District Stock Inspector in our area. They were in January of 2010.



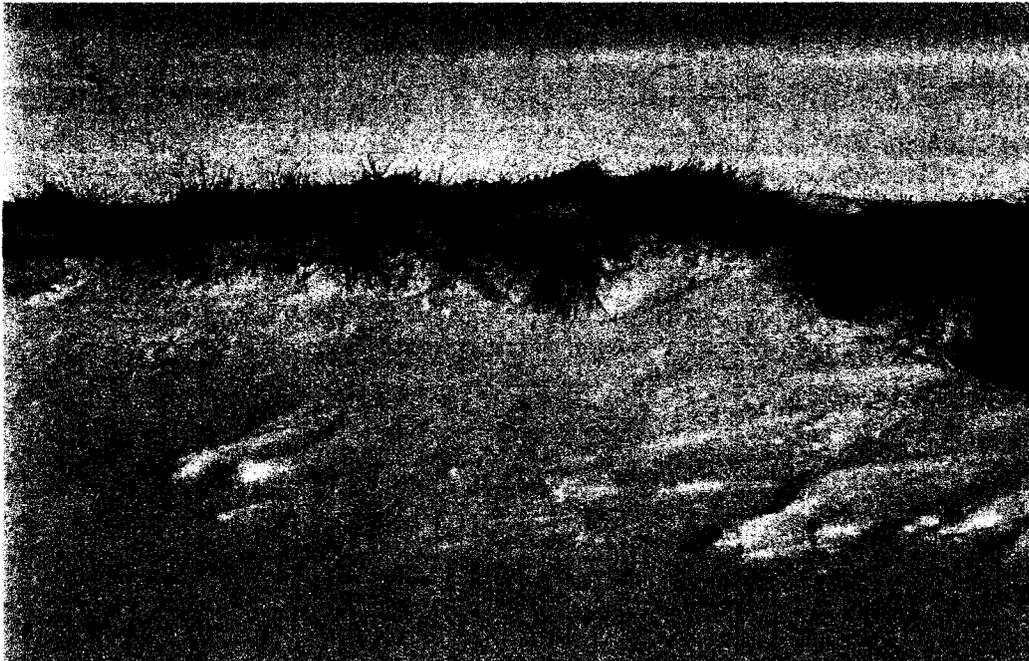
**East side of haystack looking south; buffalo manure scattered**



**East side of haystack looking north**



West side of haystack; drift that buffalo walked on and ate on top of the haystack



Top of haystack on west side



Buffalo hair on wire that was tore down by the buffalo, west side of haystack



Top wire of hay yard tore down, buffalo hair on wire, looking north



South side of haystack, gate wire tore down



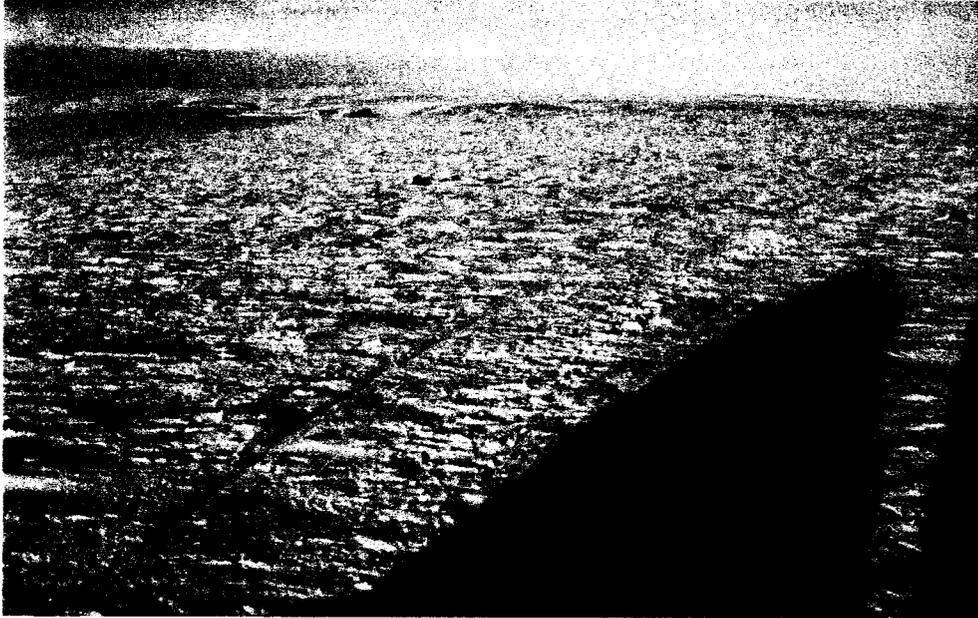
Fence and gate tore down by buffalo; hay and buffalo manure; looking east of the haystack



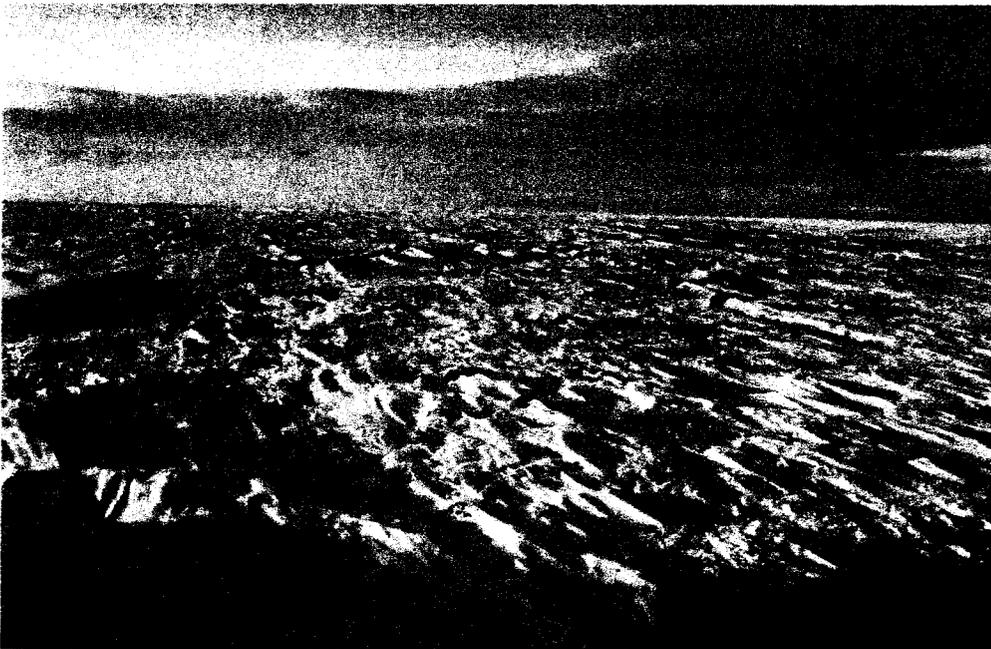
Gate east of the haystack tore down by buffalo



Close up of same gate as above



Bedding grounds of the Ft. Belknap buffalo. Looking northwest (Hofeldt's pasture both pictures)



On January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2011 I, Justin Simenson, received a phone call from Viki Hofeldt stating they had Ft. Belknap reservation buffalo in their pasture north of their house. Vicki also stated that she heard they were on Jergesen's land also. I told Vicki to call the Blaine County Sheriff's Office.

On January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011 I received an anonymous phone call stating the Ft. Belknap reservation buffalo were out again on the east side of the Barney Olson Rd. Undersheriff Pat Payette and I drove the Barney Olson Rd. south to Doug Hofeldt's and did not see any buffalo. Pat and I did find buffalo tracks along the road. We also found fence the buffalo had damaged on both sides of the Barney Olson Rd. Pictures were taken.

On January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2011 I received a phone call from Vicki Hofeldt stating the reservation buffalo were in their pasture again. Vicki stated the buffalo were in their haystack.

On January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2011 Vicki Hofeldt called and stated the Ft. Belknap reservation buffalo were in their haystack and pasture again.

On January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2011 Undersheriff Pat Payette, deputy county attorney Valerie O., and I went flying with Ed Obie. We flew south of Chinook and over where the Ft. Belknap buffalo were reported being. We saw nine head of buffalo on Walt Funks, lots of tracks all over Hofeldts and east to the reservation line. There were places in the border fence that the buffalo had gone over or through the fence. There was a haystack to the north of Vicki Hofeldt that sustained significant damage.

On January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2011 I received a call from Vicki Hofeldt stating the Ft. Belknap buffalo were out again on their property. Undersheriff Pat Payette and I drove south on the Barney Olson Road and we found approximately 200 head of buffalo on the east side of the Barney Olson rd. The land the buffalo were on belonged to Doug Hofeldt.

On January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2011 Vicki Hofeldt called and stated that approximately 200 head of the Ft. Belknap buffalo were in their haystack just to North of their house.

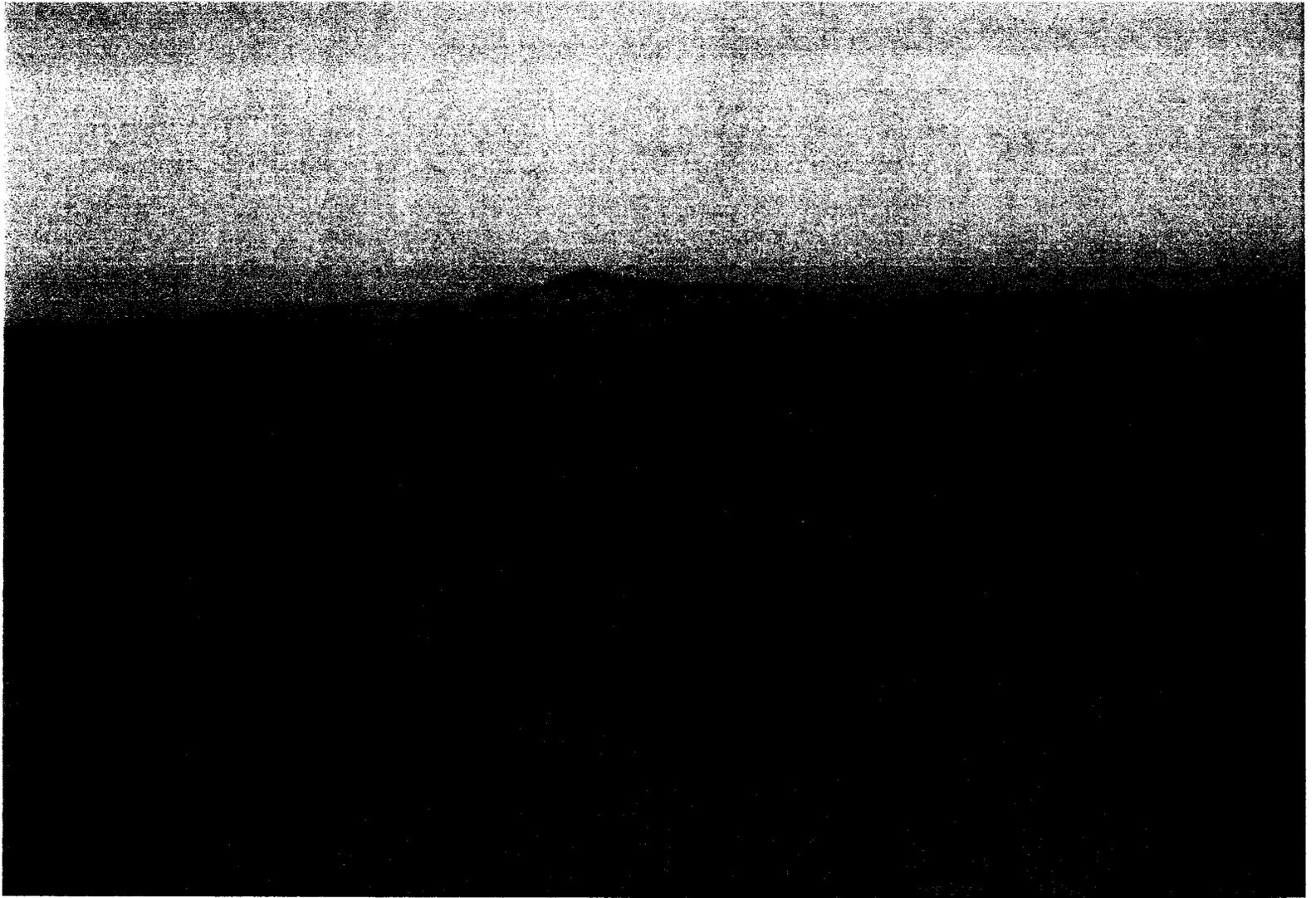
On January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2011 Daryl Mitchell called and stated he had 11 head of buffalo on his place and the last he knew of them they were heading toward Doug Mitchell's. Audrey Cox called the Blaine County Sheriff's Office and stated he also had buffalo on his place.

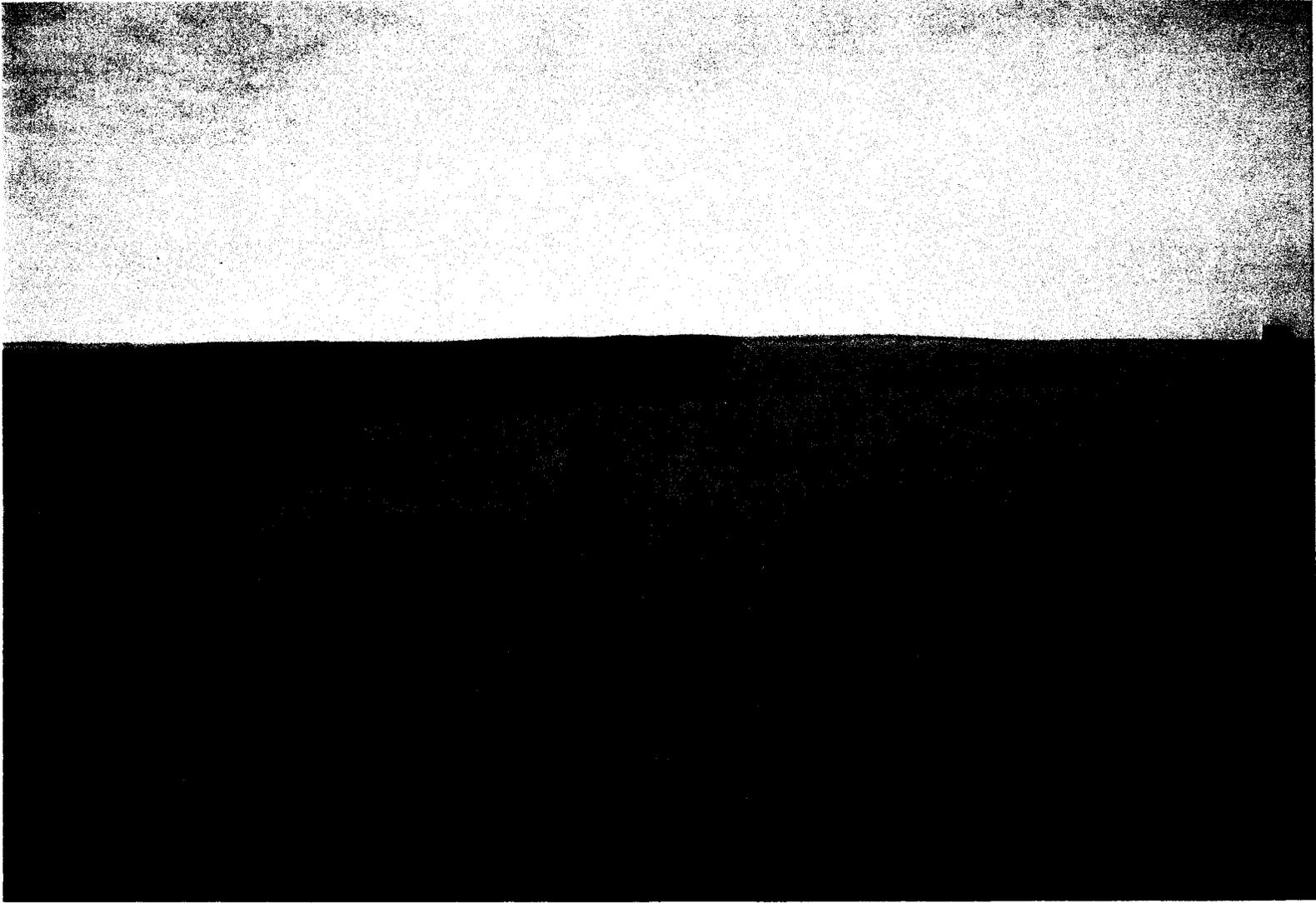
On January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2011 Game Warden Mike Lee and I went to Doug Hofeldts residence and took snow mobiles out and took some pictures of the damage the Ft. Belknap buffalo did. (Please see exhibit A) Game Warden Lee and I drove to the east and south of Doug Hofeldt's house.

On January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2011 Sheriff Glenn Huestis and I drove to Doug Hofeldts and met with Doug Hofeldt and Roger Jergesen. Roger stated the Ft. Belknap buffalo were on his place December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2010 and had been back numerous occasions. Doug was concerned on how much damage to fences, haystacks, and how much spring pasture he might lose because of the buffalo.



These photos were taken by our Undersheriff in Blaine County from the Barney Olson Rd. which is a county road 7-8 miles off of the reservation.





These are photos of the existing fence between us and Fort Belknap Reservation. A regular 4 wire cow fence. If you look closely at the wires, you will notice the many tied together spots of wire in the fence.

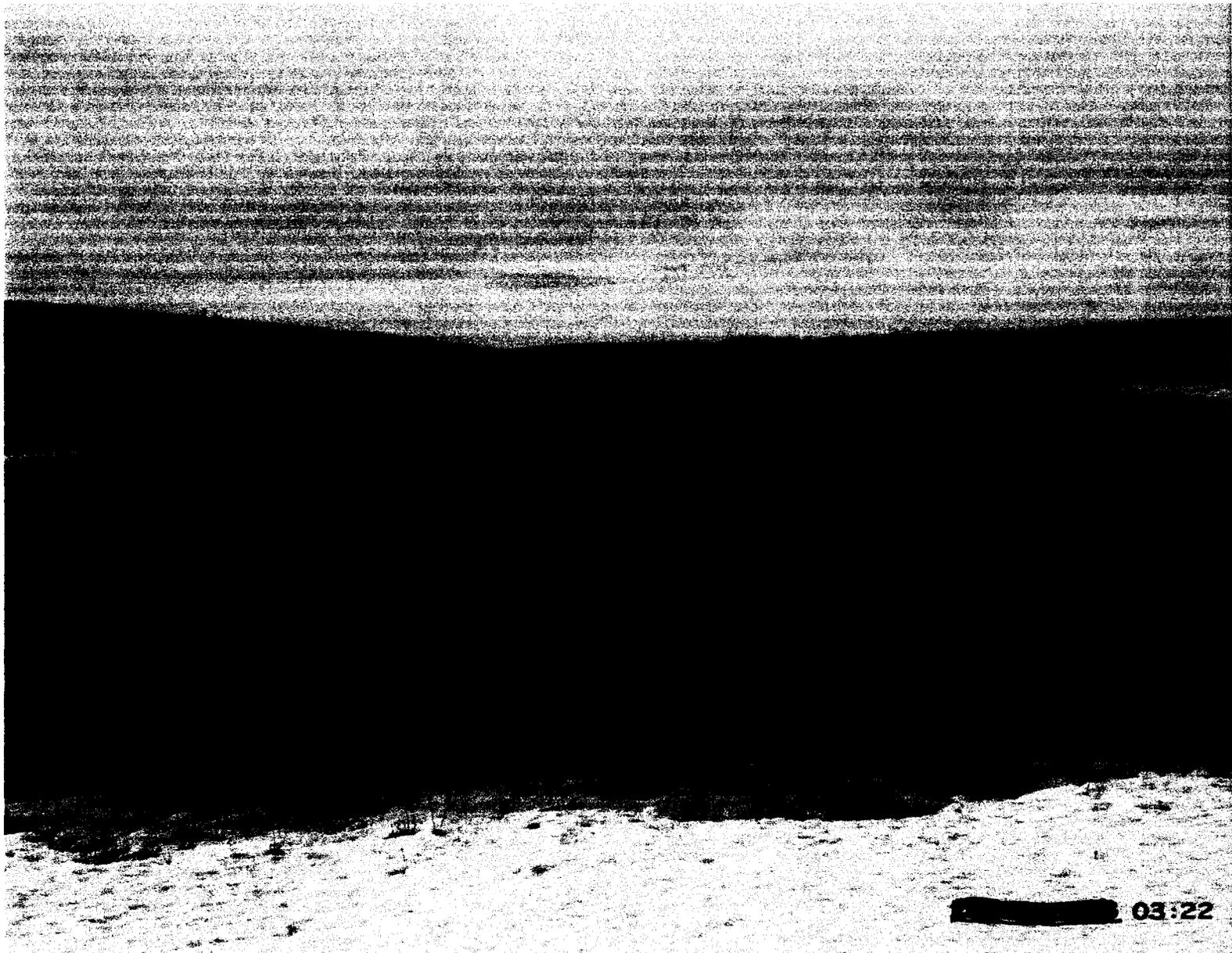


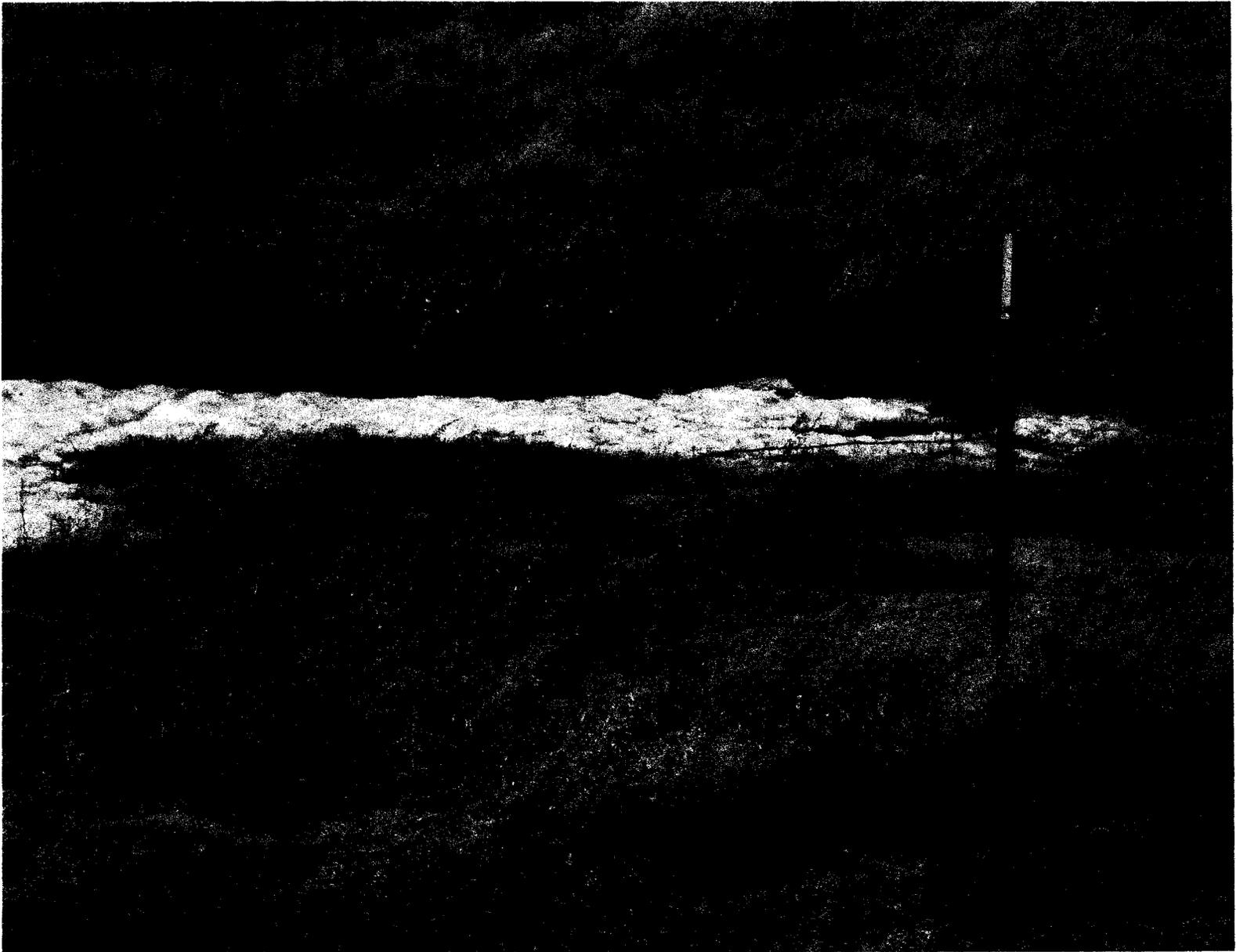


The next pictures are of the most recent out break on February 28,2013. Again these are only a few examples of the many fences that were trampled by these animals going to and from the reservation. We as landowners are held responsible to fix all of these breaks before we are able to put our cattle into our own private pasture land. This is also only 1 ranches loss. There are many other landowners that are effected by this continual and unwanted trespass by these bison.

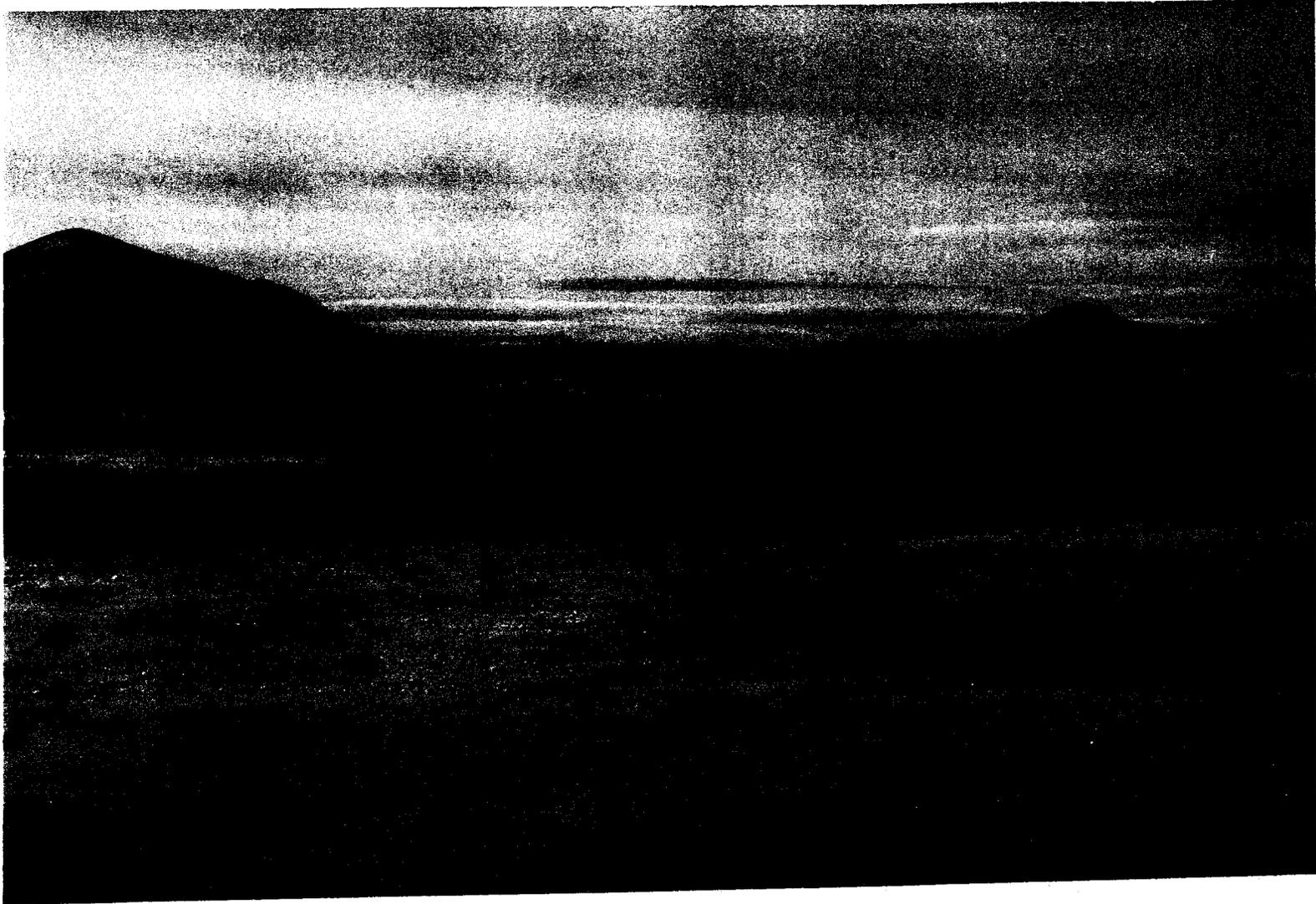








This is a photo of where you can tell the bison had been hanging around for more than a day or 2, again on our private land. Its not only the fences and haystacks that are our concern, it is also the loss of grass in our pastureland that we rely on for our cattle in the spring and summer. This leads to more costs for us, in needing to lease more pasture from someone else so that our cattle will have adequate feed. Also the cost of trucking our cattle to and from our rented pasture. Please take these examples of the power of bison into consideration when you make any decisions regarding bison.



We as Ranchers cannot sustain these costs and stay in business. So also think of our main income in this state, agriculture.

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