

**BUFFALO FIELD CAMPAIGN**

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HB 328

February 5, 2013

Chairman Jeffrey Welborn and members of the House Fish, Wildlife & Parks Committee, Montana House of Representatives
PO Box 200500
Helena, MT 59620-0500

Mr. Chairman and members of the House Fish, Wildlife & Parks Committee,

On behalf of Buffalo Field Campaign I am submitting testimony on HB 328. Mr. Chairman, I would also request that my testimony be shared with committee members and entered into the hearing record. Thank you.

Buffalo Field Campaign is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) whose mission is to stop the slaughter of Yellowstone's wild buffalo herd, protect the natural habitat of wild free-roaming buffalo and native wildlife, and to work with people of all Nations to honor the sacredness of the wild buffalo.

Buffalo Field Campaign is located in West Yellowstone, Gallatin County, Montana, and is supported by volunteers and citizens in Montana and by people from around the world who value America's native wildlife and the ecosystems upon which they depend, and enjoy the natural wonders of our irreplaceable public lands.

As an organization and on behalf of our members, Buffalo Field Campaign is concerned and actively involved with protecting the last remaining descendants of indigenous buffalo in North America to occupy their original range, and securing long-term protection for viable populations of wild buffalo and year-round habitat.

Buffalo Field Campaign is adamantly opposed to HB 328, for many reasons.

HB 328 subjects the last few buffalo remaining as public wildlife to having their "actual physical location" disclosed for targeting by the state of Montana for execution.

A 'hunt' should not be an extermination program, and hunters should not be manipulated by Montana into being its executioners as HB 328 attempts to do.

HB 328 is a mockery of anyone's idea of 'fair-chase'.

We want to point out the actual status (S2) of bison as a wildlife species in Montana: "At risk because of very limited and/or potentially declining population numbers, range and/or habitat, making it vulnerable to global extinction or extirpation in the state. Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks also designated bison a Tier I species: "Greatest conservation need. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks has a clear obligation to use its resources to implement conservation actions that provide direct benefit to these species, communities, and focus areas." (Adams and Dood, Montana FWP 2011)

Montana's wild lands, wildlife including wild bison, recreation and open spaces are cherished by Montanans and draw millions of people who annually sustain a multi-billion dollar economy.

Why does the Montana Legislature continue to attack and destroy our wildlife heritage that makes living in Montana possible and desirable?

In May 2012, the Montana-Wyoming Tribal Leaders Council urged the state of Montana to protect the buffalo in Yellowstone, to cease harassing the wild species on their calving grounds, and to recognize Treaty Obligations to American Indian Tribes to protect viable populations of migratory buffalo in their native habitat.

Protecting our last wild buffalo is also a priority of the eight Montana legislators comprising the American Indian Caucus.

We encourage the committee to heed the call of the majority of Montanans and the Tribal Leaders Council and American Indian Caucus

to respect and live up to its trustee responsibilities for our buffalo, a valued native species by voting to defeat HB 328.

HB 328 is not amendable. Thank you for taking action to protect migratory buffalo as a valued wildlife species in Montana.

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