

MONTANA BISON



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JOIN THE MBA FOR THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY WINTER MEETING!



Please plan to join the Montana Bison Association for its annual meeting in Missoula, Montana this January 4th & 5th at the Missoula Hilton Garden Inn! The conference will feature an array of speakers discussing everything from an update on bison from Montana State Veterinarian, Dr. Marty Zaluski, to a report on the state of the national bison industry, to grizzly bear recovery in the Rocky Mountains. There is sure to be something for everyone.

The conference will kick off on Friday, January 4th at the host hotel with a social and bison taco bar before Dr. Zaluski addresses the group. Saturday will see updates from the National Bison Association, as well as updates on the aforementioned grizzly bears and the National Bison Range, and the start-up bison operation story of Matt Skoglund's North Bridger Bison Ranch.

The MBA will also feature an extensive direct-marketing session with a range of speakers who will discuss how to effectively market your bison products without breaking the bank. Speakers to include Roam Free Bison Bites, High Country Ag Marketing, and Montrail Bison, LLC. Register at montanabison.org.

Photo: LTC Tim Gardipee



PRESIDENT'S CORNER WITH AARON PAULSON

Greetings, I hope your winter is off to a reasonable start. As I write this the thermometer climbs from our morning start of -12 degrees. Not sure if that is reasonable or not! But the bison do not seem to mind, so neither should we! Aren't we lucky to raise animals that thrive and adapt to either the hot or cold. We are anxious to see everyone at the upcoming winter conference. The lineup of presentations will be diverse and educational. This is the last president's corner article I'll be writing. As the January meeting approaches I reflect on the past 6 years of being on the board of directors. The experience has been tremendous. Alongside a long list of other board members as well as active members we have had a big run. It seemed to be a big transitional period with sensitive topics addressed that required a great team of people. Beginning with trips to Helena to meet with legislative committees to plea for limiting additional legislation that would affect producers. Radio interviews, meetings and endless phone calls and meetings with DNRC and conservation districts. The new logo, updated newsletter and many other unique milestones. Surely these have been similar issues to those of past boards, but it was a great experience and we could not have done it without the support of the entire board of directors, the membership and our families. So, our hats are off to all of you. I look forward to many more years of membership. The coming 20 year anniversary is one to celebrate. Founders of this great association had a wonderful vision and hopefully we have been able to carry the torch and continue to adapt as we move into the future. As I pass the torch I thank you all for trusting your MBA board and this great organization.



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Ranch General Manager



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EPIC JOURNEY OF BISON AND GRIZZLY BY LTC (RET.) TIM A. GARDIPEE

The Montana Bison Association has a unique opportunity to hear from a decades long study of the "EPIC JOURNEY OF BISON AND GRIZZLY" BY DR. David Mattson.

This fantastic presentation will cover the age old relationship between these two gigantic and dramatic mammals, always present in Montana for centuries.

As Bison owners and Lovers, you will find this video compelling and fascinating. This presentation to occur during the 20th Anniversary of the Montana Bison Association., in January at the Missoula Hilton Garden Inn.

The Epic Shared Journey of Bison & Grizzly Bears *plus*

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WAR

Award-winning film
about legendary
environmentalist and
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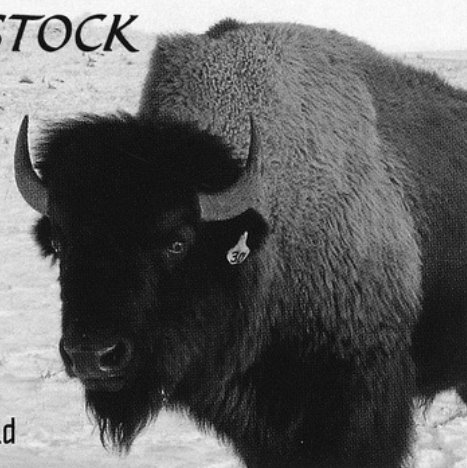


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MBA DONATES \$1,000 TO NBA SCIENCE AND RESEARCH FUND, CHALLENGES OTHERS BY JIM MATHESON

This Fall, the Montana Bison Association took the lead in bison herd health by donating \$1,000 to the National Bison Association's (NBA) Science and Research fundraising initiative.

The funds are being collected to support the broad efforts of the NBA's Science and Research committee which is embarking on three major herd health initiatives in 2019:

1. A Center of Excellence for Bison at South Dakota State University. SDSU is interested in potentially hosting a Center of Excellence for Bison, which dedicates staff, faculty and research dollars towards sustaining and improving bison herd health across North America.
2. A Mycoplasma Bovis eradication effort that begins with collecting necropsied samples from infected animals, also at SDSU. The University has committed faculty to analyze samples as to isolate the host problem organism to eventually develop a vaccine for this terrible disease
3. Nutritional Guidelines for bison, which has never been developed before. The National Bison Association has been working with the National Academy of Sciences for the last two years to lay the groundwork to eventually develop official nutritional guidelines for bison, which are noticeably absent from their extensive list of guidelines for species across the spectrum.

The National Bison Association thanks the Montana Bison Association for their generosity and leadership in this very important effort by the bison industry. The NBA further plans to challenge other state/regional bison organizations to match the MBA's \$1,000 donation towards the Science and Research Fund. Learn more at bisoncentral.com.



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TIM A. GARDIPEE
LTC (ret.) U.S. ARMY
OWNER/ OPERATOR

NORTH BRIDGER BISON: STARTING A BISON RANCH FROM SCRATCH BY MATT SKOGLUND

The idea of starting a bison ranch was floating around my brain last summer. I craved doing something tangible, land-based, entrepreneurial, and on my own. I love bison, I love hard work, I'm passionate about land use, I'm passionate about food and where it comes from, but the bison ranch idea was really just a pipe dream at that time.

Then I read Dan O'Brien's classic book *Buffalo for the Broken Heart* last fall. Reading about his inspiring journey gave my pipe dream a shot in the arm. I started doing more reading and research. And thanks to Google, I learned about Roland Kroos and met him for lunch in Bozeman in January.

Two months later I found myself at one of Roland's Holistic Management workshops on a bison ranch. It was gasoline on the fire. Talking and learning about grazing, grass, water, fencing, and all of the other components of bison-ranching was beyond interesting and exciting to me.

I returned home to Montana bursting with enthusiasm, joined the National Bison Association, and started working on a business plan and looking for land. And then TheBison Ranch Dream was shot in the gut. Land is not cheap, and my wife, Sarah, and I have two little kids. How the hell could we make this work? But I kept looking, kept making phone calls, kept reading, and kept dreaming. And then I came across a few parcels of land west of Wilsall that were reasonably priced. I contacted the ranch broker, and we walked the land a couple of times. The bison ranch pipe dream began to breathe again.

Continued on page 6.

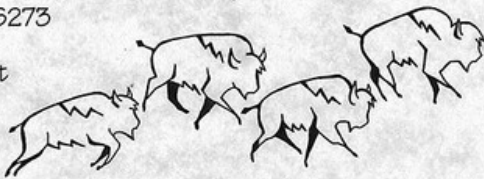


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STARTING A BISON RANCH FROM SCRATCH, CONT.

"In late May, I walked the land with Roland to ground-truth its potential as a home base for a bison ranch (with the understanding that we'd have to lease more land eventually). Roland thought it was solid. I agreed.

And by that point, I had mentally crossed some bridge where the risk of not starting a bison ranch was greater than the risk of taking on a ton of debt and starting a bison ranch. We got the land under contract in June with a closing date in early September.

Over the summer, I reached out to as many people as possible. I joined the Montana Bison Association and attended the summer meeting and ranch tour. I put together a website for our soon-to-be ranch and meat business.

I'll spare you the gory details, but the post-contract land negotiations over the summer were not easy, and securing financing was a roller coaster. (Side note: we ended up getting financing from Stockman Bank, and Brenton Melton in Stockman's Manhattan office was incredible to work with – a good person and a real professional.)

In September, we closed, and we started working with Forest Chapman on fencing. It's now late November, and we're talking to multiple producers about buying bison. We plan to have bison on the ranch in January or February. My last day at my "day job" (where I've worked for a decade) is December 19th. We are 100% all in.

It's been a rewarding, interesting, fun, and challenging journey already, but the thing that sticks out to me most – by far – is all of the amazing people that have helped us along the way. Roland has been invaluable. Jim Matheson and Dave Carter at the NBA have been great. Steve Kroon, Craig Denney, Julia Arnold, Doug and Mary Stange. Andrew Bardwell. Aaron Paulson. And Chad Peterson, who has been incredibly generous with his time and advice and has become a valued friend and mentor.

The list goes on, but – to a person – I have been blown away by the kindness and generosity of the bison-ranching community in Montana. I am just incredibly grateful for all of the help, support, and advice we have received from so many thoughtful, caring people.

Continued on page 7.

STARTING A BISON RANCH FROM SCRATCH CONT.



The Bison Ranch Dream becomes more real everyday, and I could not be more excited about it. I love the work, and I love building our ranch and business.

But, above all, when I think of The Bison Ranch Dream, I think of the generous people who have helped us – and how North Bridger Bison simply wouldn't be possible without their help. And I am filled with a sense of deep gratitude.

To the bison. And to all of you.

Thank you.

Matt Skoglund, North Bridger Bison

www.northbridgerbison.com

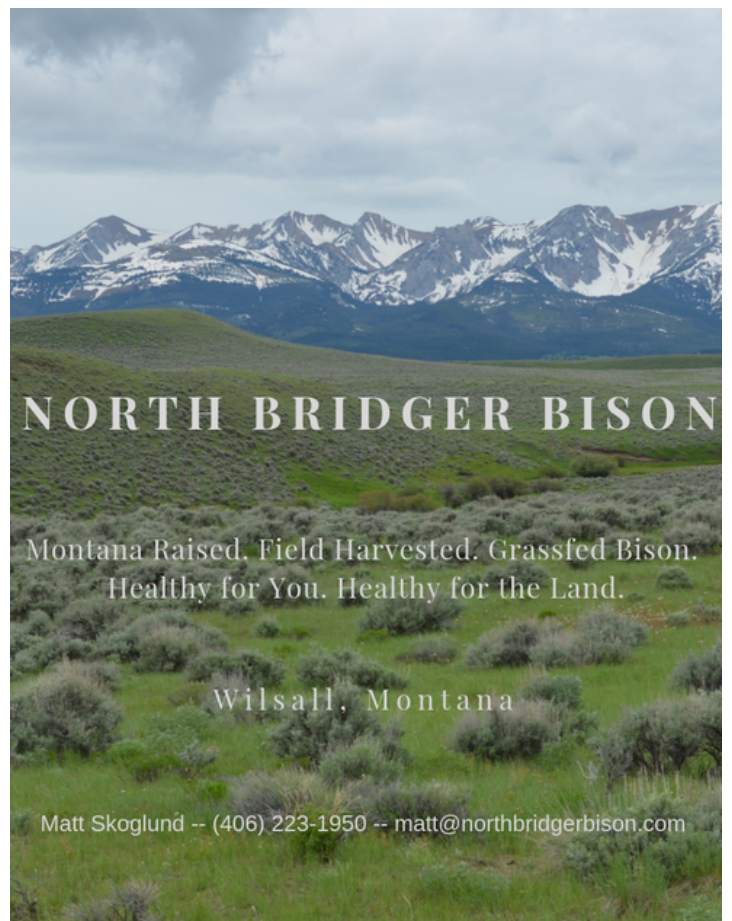
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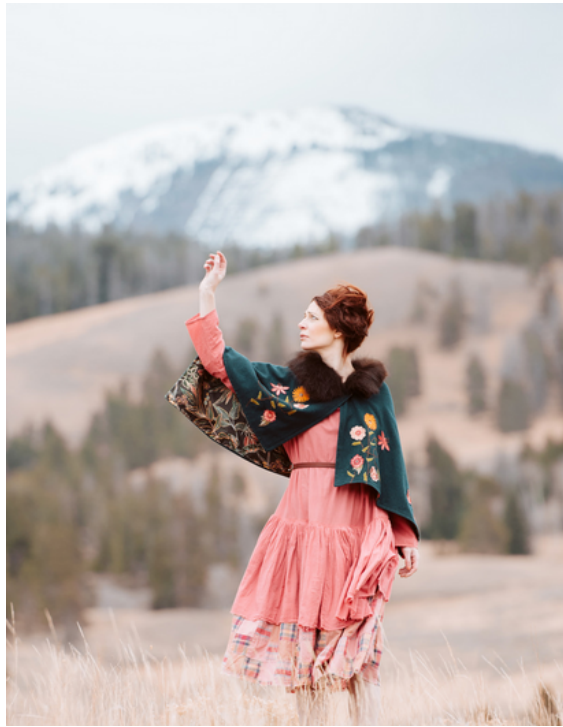
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MBA WINTER MEETING FASHION SHOW FEATURING MONTANA WOOLS BY JENNIFER OLSSON

Jennifer Olsson, MBA board member, will present her latest sweaters, scarves, capes, and jacket designs during the 20th Anniversary Winter Conference, on Saturday night, January 5. Celebrating her 11th year in business, Jennifer works from the ground up to create her unique style, with her on-line company, Montana Bison Fashion & Furs (www.mtbisonfashionfurs.com) . From stretching the hides and shearing them, to processing the hides for yarns and trims, she incorporates bison fur and fiber into every garment. Jennifer's work has been featured in Cowboy's and Indian's Magazine's Fall, Winter, and Spring fashion collections the past two years. Her show will be a fun and lively event incorporating Native American drummers from the University of Montana's Kyiyio Club.



BISON MARKETING WITH BRITTANY MASTERS AT MBA WINTER MEETING

BY JENNIFER OLSSON

Brittany Masters, a former marketing professional with Boeing Aircraft, has added, Bison Rancher, to her resume'. Together with her partner, Jonathan Sepp, they have created, the successful goroamfree.com, Bison Bites Jerkey, as featured in our fall newsletter. To help the rest of us grow successful products, Brittany will offer a unique class titled: Defining Your Brand Strategy to Command a Premium Price. To be included in this two hour event will be a discussion about why brand is important for bison producers. Examples of good and bad brand marketing will be shown, and attendees will create their own outlines for defining a brand strategy. Free of charge, this class will be held on Sunday, January 6 during the 20th Anniversary Winter Conference in, Missoula, MT. For more information, visit www.mbaconference.com.



BISON AUCTION RESULTS - COURTESY OF NATIONAL BISON ASSOCIATION

Prices reported are class average. More detail available at bisoncentral.com.

November 17, 2018 - Custer State Park - South Dakota

Two Year Old Bred Heifers \$3,250

Mature Cows, Bred \$2,925

Two Year Old Open Heifers \$2,300

Mature Cows, Open \$2,343

Yearling Heifers \$2,300

Heifer Calves \$1,575

Bull Calves \$1,575

Heavy Cut Bull Calves \$1,775

Yearling Bulls \$2,231

Two Year Old Grade Bulls \$3,025

Two Year Old Breeding Bulls \$3,940

Three Year Old Breed Bull \$4,500

Total animals sold 329



BISON AUCTION RESULTS - COURTESY OF NATIONAL BISON ASSOCIATION

November 24, 2018 - Minnesota Buffalo Association Legends of the Fall Sale - Minnesota

Heifer Calves \$1,554

Producer's Pride Heifer Calves 5 Sets \$1,264

Yearling Heifers \$2,269

2 Year Bred Heifers \$3,683

Producer's Pride Yearling Heifer 4 Sets \$1,950

Bull Calves \$1,703

Yearling Bulls \$3,900

Two Year Bull \$5,200

Total Animals 80

December 1, 2018 Western Bison Association Wild West Stampede - Utah

Group Average \$

3 Yr. Bred Cows \$2,600

Yearling Heifers \$2,950

Pen of 2 Yearling Heifers \$4,400

Yearling Bulls - Show \$2,871

Yearling Bulls - Sale \$1,880

Heifer Calves - Show \$1,193

Heifers Calves - Sale \$886

Bull Calves - Show \$1,433

Bull Calves - Sale \$1,070

2 Yr. Bred Heifers \$2,762

2 Yr. Bulls \$4,342

Total Animals 77

December 1, 2018 Kansas Buffalo Association Production Sale - Kansas

Group Average \$

Bull Calves \$1,505

Heifer Calves \$1,043

Yearling Bulls \$19,445

Yearling Heifers \$1,485

2YBulls \$2,220

2YBred Heifers \$1,734

2YOpen Heifers \$1,500 - Estimated

Bred Cows \$2,000 - Estimated

Open Cows \$ 1,500 - Estimated

Total Animals 567

NATIONAL BISON ASSOCIATION NEWS

SENATORS PUSH TO STOP CONSUMERS FROM GETTING BUFFALOED BY MISLABELED MEAT BY DAVE CARTER

Westminster, CO – A bipartisan group of five U.S. Senators today pushed federal regulators to immediately halt the sale of imported water buffalo meat products labeled in a manner that leads consumers to believe they are buying North American bison.

Republican Senators John Hoeven (ND) and John Thune (SD), along with Democratic Senators Michael Bennet (CO), Heidi Heitkamp (ND) and Tom Udall (NM) sent a letter to FDA Deputy Commissioner Stephen Ostroff and USDA Acting Under Secretary Carmen Rottenberg urging prompt action to respond to the National Bison Association's complaint regarding imported water buffalo meat being labeled only with descriptions such as "Natural Ground Buffalo."

"Bison ranchers and marketers have worked diligently for more than two decades to build a strong market for bison meat. Their success was built on developing a relationship with the public based upon the great taste and high quality of bison meat," the senators wrote.

"Because the term buffalo is widely used to describe bison, the failure to label water buffalo transparently and accurately could be misleading to the American consumer."

The National Bison Association in September filed a formal complaint with the FDA and USDA regarding water buffalo being marketed in a manner to deceive customers into believing they were buying bison meat. The complaint was prompted by a surge of products in the human food and pet products categories containing water buffalo meat that were only labeled as "buffalo."

Dave Carter, executive director of the National Bison Association, noted, "Americans consider the term buffalo to describe bison. Importers of water buffalo products are buffaloing consumers into believing their products are bison. That's wrong."

Carter added, "We appreciate the leadership of these five senators to push the FDA and USDA to immediately address this mislabeling."





January 26, 2018 - Denver, CO

Sale -10 a.m.

Bid Online at liveauciton.tv

Learn more at bisoncentral.com

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MONTANA BISON ASSOCIATION 2019 WINTER MEETING

JAN. 4 - 5 - MISSOULA - HILTON GARDEN INN

\$100/person, includes 3 bison meals

- Friday - Meet/greet and dinner, featuring Dr. Marty Zaluski
- Saturday - Presentations on Marketing, How to Start a Bison Ranch, Bison Conformation, the national bison industry, the National Bison Range, and more.
- Registration includes Saturday night banquet dinner featuring a bison entree and live stream of the Turner Prairie Performance Bison Auction. Saturday night also includes the annual fun auction. Please bring your fun auction item!

Register online at montanabison.org



Mark your calendars for January 4 - 5, for the Montana Bison Association's annual Winter Conference! The board of directors are finalizing the meeting details, but we promise another fun and educational event filled with top notch speakers, great food and incredible company! Host hotel is the Missoula Hilton Garden Inn, learn more at www.montanabison.org and please plan to join us!



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MBA WINTER CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

The Montana Bison Association Winter Conference will be held this year in Missoula at the Hilton Garden Inn, where there is a block of discounted rooms available. The event will take place on January 4th and 5th and will feature an array of guest speakers, as well as an update from the National Bison Association. Please keep an eye on the MBA Facebook page and website for updates on conference lodging and an updated conference agenda.

Cost for the General Conference will be \$100/person and includes three meals. Please keep an eye on the MBA Facebook page and website for updates on conference lodging and an updated conference agenda. Online Conference Registration will soon be available at www.montanabison.org.

Reservations accepted through December 21, 2018.

Name _____

Ranch Name _____

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State _____

Zip Code _____

Telephone _____

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Web Site: _____

_____ REGISTERING (Adult: \$ 100 each)

***Registration includes Friday dinner, Lunch and Dinner on Saturday

_____ Kids 14 AND UNDER FREE

2019 MONTANA BISON ASSOCIATION DUES

***make checks payable to MBA; \$100/Year or \$500/Lifetime

Please fill out form, or register online at www.montanabison.org, and return with check to:

Montana Bison Association
Julia Arnold
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Conrad, MT 59425

Please call (406) 627-2436 or email: jarnoldmt@gmail.com with any questions.

Reserve lodging by calling the Hilton Garden Inn at 406-532-5300 and request the Montana Bison Association room block.



MONTANA'S NEXT GENERATION CONFERENCE - JANUARY 25-26 - SHELBY, MONTANA



Register now for two days of workshops designed to improve your bottom line!

Friday, January 25, 2019 - 11 am - 9 pm - Shelby Civic Center

Scott Shearer - *"Six Hats of Agriculture and Making Sense Today"*

Matt Roberts - *"Importance of Trade to U.S. Agriculture"*

Saturday, January 26, 2019 - 8:30 am - 5 pm - Shelby High School

36 workshops on Financial Management, Succession Planning,
Crops and Livestock Production and More! Pesticide Points Available.

Registrations due by January 12 for early bird discount

Visit **mtnextgen.com** or call 406-873-2239 for registration information

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in the conference should contact Lacy Roberts at 406-873-5618 or Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339 by Jan. 21, 2019.

CONGRESS PASSES 2018 FARM BILL FROM THE WASHINGTON POST

The Senate on Tuesday voted overwhelmingly to approve an \$867 billion farm bill, as Congress appeared poised to pass legislation that will help an agriculture industry battered by President Trump's trade war.

In an 87-to-13 vote, the Senate approved legislation that allocates billions of dollars in subsidies to American farmers, legalizes hemp, bolsters farmers markets and rejects stricter limits on food stamps pushed by House Republicans.

The legislation will now head to the House, where it is also expected to pass, after lawmakers worked out a House-Senate compromise this month. President Trump expressed support for the legislation on Tuesday and said he expects it will be signed into law.

Congressional negotiators said they faced increasing pressure to complete the bill from farmers and ranchers who have suffered steep declines in commodities prices amid Trump's ongoing trade war with China.

Read more at https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2018/12/11/congresss-billion-farm-bill-is-out-heres-whats-it/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.36da8fd1c39e



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