

# Montana Bison News

**A newsletter from the Montana Bison Association**

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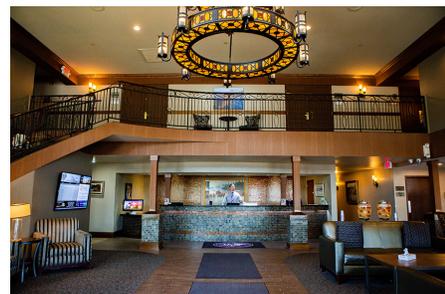
**Fall 2021 Edition**

**Edited and Produced by All Things Bison**

## MBA Winter Conference Save the Date, January 7-8, 2022

The 2022 Winter Conference will be held this year in Great Falls, MT on January 7th-8th. Friday evening festivities will kick off at the nearby Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center.

We will have the opportunity to tour the Museum, listen to stories from the Museum's Interpreter, and learn how the bison was so influential to Meriwether Lewis and William Clark. Saturday sessions will be held at the Heritage Inn.



We will have great presenters all day as well as the General Winter Membership Meeting in the later afternoon.

Please plan ahead and book your hotel room at the Heritage Inn. Rooms are available for the block price of \$99 (plus tax) per night. The Heritage Inn offers a pool, weight room, coffee bar, and Sport's Bar as well. The Heritage Inn can be reached at (406) 761-1900. The Conference cost will be \$125.00 per person (\$70 for children under 12).

Reservations for the Conference (as well as a link to renew your MBA memberships) can be made on-line at the [www.montanabison.org](http://www.montanabison.org).

## President's Corner - Julia Arnold

Dear Fellow Members...

What tenacity those in Agriculture must possess these days. As producers we have had to make many difficult decisions this year regarding what is best for our herd. Never have I spent so many hours and hours looking for, making phone calls, and even scouring Facebook for hay. Members have shared they have imported hay from as far away as North Carolina just to ensure their herd eats this winter. Likewise, as we continue to face the ongoing drought, increasing feed costs, stagnant live animal prices, continued lack of processing plants (just to name a few,) the decisions we make today are more imperative than ever.

We are planning our Winter Conference for

Chris D. Bechtold  
Ranch General Manager



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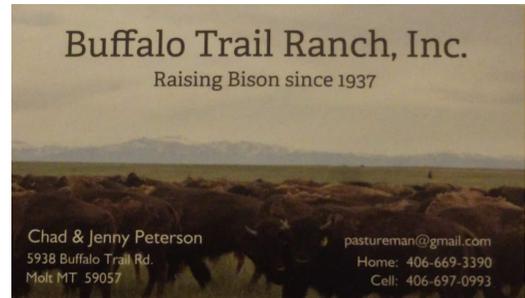
January 7-8, 2022 in Great Falls, MT. We will meet Friday evening at the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center to spend time celebrating and learning about the bison from the perspective of Lewis and Clark. On Saturday we will meet to share a much needed camaraderie, knowledge, and a sense of support so needed to successfully navigate these trying times. Please watch for emails and information on the Website regarding the Conference.

Hopefully, you were able to attend our summer conference. It was a fun and educational three days for everyone who was able to attend. We had almost half of those that attended from the Western Bison Association. I truly enjoyed having WBA Members at the Conference as it added a new perspective to the issues facing MT producers. We all owe special thanks to Chris Sullivan and his family, for all the time and effort Chris put into the conference. Please remember the WBA Winter Conference and Sale will be December 2-4, 2021 at the Golden Spike Event Center. Please check out their website for up to date information on their Winter Conference. I want to send a thank you to Matt Skoglund for serving on the MBA Board. He brought a depth of knowledge, insight, and perspective that was very valued. If you are interested in serving on the Board, please reach out and let me or any other board member know. We will have two director positions open in January and will hold elections at the Membership Meeting in January.

Our Association is in need of those who want to share their talents and knowledge of bison in our great State. New officers will also be elected following the winter meeting at the Sunday Morning Board meeting that all are also invited to attend. Please also be thinking of ideas, concerns, interests that you would like to see the MBA Board explore in the upcoming year.

Commercial bison producers need to be aware of the ongoing concerns that continue to arise from plant-based meat products. This fall it appears these products will be venturing in to the (mock) chicken business. I cannot express my appreciation to the NBA for doing the leg-work to monitor this situation and keep us all informed. I truly believe bison meat will continue to sell itself by the quality it offers its customers.

This will be the last newsletter I will write as President of the Association. I am excited and anxious to watch as the Association evolves. I encourage the Association to continue to look at the by-laws and be a voice for the Commercial bison producer in Montana. Without a doubt the MBA is the only unified voice for the commercial producer. I do hope the Association continues to foster relationships, support, and laws that continue to allow bison to be a vibrant agricultural industry in the State.



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Wishing you all the best-  
Julia Arnold



## Looking for Hay?

Several internet sources to possibly find some hay and/or check the hay market:

- The Montana Department of Livestock has a Hay Hotline that allows you to select for certain parameters if you are looking for (or want to sell) hay. [www.AGR.MT.Gov/hay-Hotline](http://www.AGR.MT.Gov/hay-Hotline)
- The Northern Agri News has listings for hay [www.NorthernAg.net/hay-markets](http://www.NorthernAg.net/hay-markets)
- Facebook is also a great source for potential hay connections. If you are not Facebook savvy try searching for the 'Hay in Montana' group (as well as Alberta and any other state more local to you).
- The Montana Hay Exchange is another online resource to explore - <http://www.hayexchange.com/mt.php>.

Please consult the USDA to make sure you are exploring all possible avenues available to you. The Disaster Assistance Programs include two major programs to help the agricultural producer. Presently in Montana the Livestock Forage Program is helping with those in counties (the majority of the State) affected by the on-going drought. Additionally the USDA is supporting producers' with the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) in the transport of feed for livestock that rely on grazing.

There are a specific set of guidelines to meet to qualify for assistance. Check with your local USDA office for help. Find your local USDA Service Center at <https://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app>.

## MBA Board of Directors 2021

**President:** Julia Arnold - Outlaw Livestock - Conrad, MT - 406-899-1611 - [tjwilsall@yahoo.com](mailto:tjwilsall@yahoo.com)

**Vice President:** Matt Skoglund - North Bridger Bison - Wilsall, MT - 406-223-1950 - [matt@northbridgerbison.com](mailto:matt@northbridgerbison.com)

**Treasurer:** Craig Denney - DDC Ranch - Park City, MT - 406-633-2743 - [montanabuffalousa@hotmail.com](mailto:montanabuffalousa@hotmail.com)

**Secretary:** Candis Westre - Bitterroot Bison Co.- Missoula, MT - 406.531.5352 - [candywestre@yahoo.com](mailto:candywestre@yahoo.com)

**Director:** Chris Bechtold - 4D Diamond Ranch - Choteau, MT - 406-466-3611 - [chris@diamond4dranch.com](mailto:chris@diamond4dranch.com)

## Disaster assistance for 2021 livestock forage losses in all 56 Montana counties

*From The Sidney Herald*

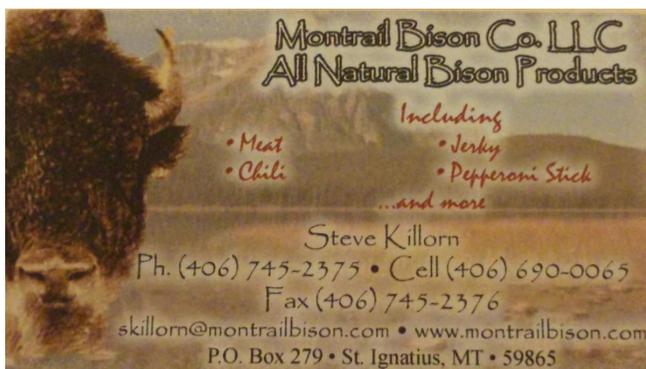


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*Reserve Operations Manager*

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Livestock producers in all 56 Montana counties are eligible to apply for 2021 Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) benefits on small grain, native pasture, improved pasture, annual ryegrass and forage sorghum.

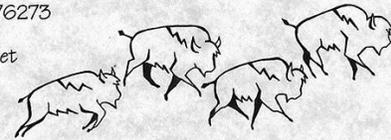
LFP provides compensation if you suffer grazing losses for covered livestock due to drought on privately owned or leased land or fire on federally managed land. County committees can only accept LFP applications after notification is received by the National Office of qualifying drought or if a federal agency prohibits producers from grazing normal permitted livestock on federally managed lands due to qualifying fire.

The following Montana counties have triggered the 2021 LFP drought criteria: Beaverhead, Big Horn, Blaine, Broadwater, Carbon, Carter, Cascade, Chouteau, Custer, Daniels, Dawson, Deer Lodge, Fallon, Fergus, Flathead, Gallatin, Garfield, Glacier, Golden Valley, Granite, Hill, Jefferson, Judith Basin, Lake, Lewis and Clark, Liberty, Lincoln, Madison, McCone, Meagher, Mineral, Missoula, Musselshell, Park, Petroleum, Phillips, Pondera, Powder River, Powell, Prairie, Ravalli, Richland, Roosevelt, Rosebud, Sanders, Sheridan, Silver Bow, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Teton, Toole, Treasure, Valley, Wheatland, Wibaux and Yellowstone.

Producers must complete a CCC-853 and the required supporting documentation no later than Jan. 31, 2022 for 2021 losses.

For additional information about LFP, including eligible livestock and fire criteria, contact the local USDA Service Center and/or visit [www.farmers.gov](http://www.farmers.gov) and/or [fsa.usda.gov/mt](http://fsa.usda.gov/mt).

**Read more**



## Utilizing the Montana State Univ. Extension Service

If you live in Montana, Montana State University Extension Programs are near you.



Presently, 94 MSU Extension agents and 26 subject matter experts serve the local needs in 56 counties and 7 reservations with one mission: to improve the lives of Montana citizens by providing unbiased, research-based education and information that integrates learning, discovery and engagement to strengthen the social, economic and environmental well-being of individuals, families and communities.

MSU Extension has designed Montana's first statewide stress management resource website, designed specifically for agriculture producers. Their goal is to provide farmers, ranchers, and their families with the tools and resources you need to help you manage your stress and fine tune your mental health. Please visit the [https://msuextension.org/wellness/stress-management/mt\\_farm\\_stress\\_clearing\\_house/index.html](https://msuextension.org/wellness/stress-management/mt_farm_stress_clearing_house/index.html) site to discover local, state and national resources that will help ease any burden that you, or a loved one, might be experiencing.

Additionally, MSU Extension offers a wide variety of publications through the Extension Store designed to provide you with current information in a concise format on topics relevant to you. MontGuides are free and can be mailed to you for a nominal fee. Over 245 MontGuides cover a wide range of topics from wills, estate planning, blister bugs, land reclamation, and a wide variety of additional topics that make the visit well worth your time.

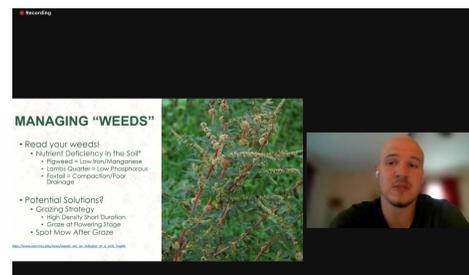
Guides can be referenced at <https://store.msuextension.org/Departments/MontGuides-by-Category.aspx>.

## National Bison Association Offers Regional Bison Management Webinar Series

*From The National Bison Association*

The National Bison Association this fall launched its inaugural "Regional Bison Management Webinar Series", which consisted of four, four-hour workshops that focused on various areas of bison management and featured expert speakers from each respective region; North, South, East and West.

The NBA Regional Bison Management Webinar Series was developed as a result of a larger project that drills down on the many regional variances involved in managing bison herds. Each region had its own working group of member-producers who helped develop the curriculum for each



region and collectively chose webinar speakers.

Said project coordinator and NBA Assistant Director, Jim Matheson, "The feedback on the webinars has been overwhelmingly positive and attendees have been very thankful to have a more local source of bison management information that goes beyond generalities and delivers specifics on an array of bison management topics. I think these webinars will be a great addition to our educational outreach resources, and I hope to see more of this type of outreach as our industry, and the global bison herd, grows."

Each regional working group also put together a corresponding working paper on their region's management variances that includes direct input from working group members as to what they do with their own herd. All of these papers can be accessed by NBA members at <https://bisoncentral.com/production-resources/>.

The series, which includes North, South, East and West webinars, is now posted in the member's area of [www.bisoncentral.com](http://www.bisoncentral.com) for anyone who may have missed these valuable webinars, or if anyone needs to reference them again. Members can access these and other NBA presentations at <https://bisoncentral.com/publication/conference-presentations/>. Not a member of the National Bison Association? Join today at <https://bisoncentral.com/nba-membership-options/>.

## 4th annual National Bison Day virtual expedition expands to feature live feed from Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump World Heritage Site in Alberta Canada

*From USDA Press Release*

WILMINGTON, Ill. (Oct. , 2021) – Registration is open for the 4th annual National Bison Day Virtual Expedition. The cross-country webinar excursion will expand this year to Canada! Celebrate America's National Mammal with us on National Bison Day- Saturday, November 6, 11 a.m. to 12 p.m.

"Bison and Owls" Go live with us to the trails at Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie where specialists with the USDA Forest Service and the Forest Preserve District of Will County will provide updates as they look for the bison! Will they see bison? Learn about the amazing relationship between bison and short-eared owls and the best places to watch for them this winter!

"Bison in Art and Culture" Go live with us to the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail Interpretive Center in Montana (Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest). See a historic drawing of bison and learn about the history of bison in art. The "Sacred Bison, Source of Life" presentation will provide an overview of the critical role of bison in the survival of Native people. This program will be presented from a very special bison-shaped canvas.

"Historic Buffalo Jumps" Go live with us to meet with Interpreters with the Montana



- Raised respectfully on pasture, hay & grains
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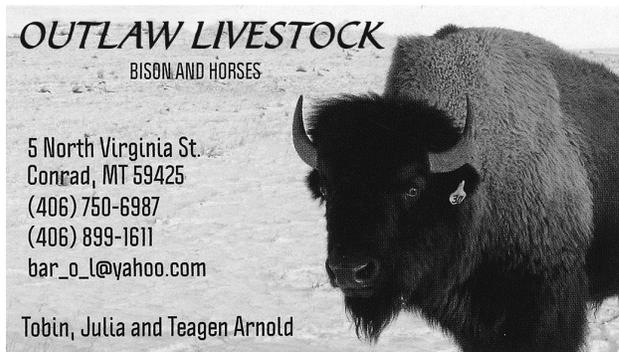
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Department of Natural Resources Conservation at First Peoples Buffalo Jump State Park in Ulm, Montana and historians at Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump World Heritage Site in Canada! We will see rock art that makes these treasured places some of the most cherished historic sites in the world.

"We are very excited about this year's National Bison Day program, and the conservation education partners who are involved from near and far," said Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie Supervisor Wade Spang.

"For months, a team has been meeting regularly to strategize and plan for this to be an engaging and educational program that we hope will provide a lasting and impressionable experience that all ages can be part of from anywhere. For kids of all ages, if you love looking for bison and learning everything you can about them, you will want to participate in the program."

Please register at [https://fpdwc.zoom.us/.../register/WN\\_XT4g52ZPRrib51TOK\\_Y7g](https://fpdwc.zoom.us/.../register/WN_XT4g52ZPRrib51TOK_Y7g).



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Tobin, Julia and Teagen Arnold

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## 2021 Montana & Western Bison Association Summer Conference a Success

*By Julia Arnold*

What a great Summer Conference we were able to hold in Plains, Montana this past mid-June. The Western Bison Association and the Montana Bison Association shared an amazing conference that had nearly fifty attendees busy for three days. We started the Summer Conference with a tour of the National Bison Range with lunch at the Range provided by Great American Bison.

We traveled on to Chris Sullivan's Ranch. We were able to enjoy both his bison and beautiful views. We had a great taco dinner courtesy of Chris & Stacy Sullivan and Troy & Candy Westre. After supper we had a presentation by the State Meat Inspector. She reviewed specifics the State looks for when processing an animal for human consumption. Before the evening ended we shared great music, friendship, and lots of laughter in Hot Springs before retiring for the evening.



Day two started with a great presentation by Jim Matheson from the NBA and an informal membership meeting discussing topics concerning both WBA and MBA members. We traveled on to the Sepp Ranch and shared a great afternoon in a

beautiful location discussing topics that included fencing, the Western Sustainability Exchange, and Carbon Credits. We went back to share a dinner meal in Plains. Many thanks are sent to Lifetime Members, John and Gaylynn Flochini, for the donation of the amazing bison steaks for our Saturday evening meal. Later we gathered at the local Fair Grounds to socialize and hold our annual Fun Auction. We raised \$1665 for the MBA. We appreciate everyone who both donated auction items and all of those who bought items.

Sunday morning we started our day with a presentation by Chris Sullivan as he talked us thorough the process of processing a bison once in the animal is in the processing facility. We later traveled on to the Harlow Ranch Bison Company. On an absolutely beautiful Sunday the Anakalea's shared their herd, their venture into the bison business, and a beautiful lunch they so generously shared that was filled with a wonderful Hawaiian flair.

What an amazing three days both Associations were able to share. A great amount of knowledge, encouragement, and laughter made the three days well worth the trip to Plains.



## Montana Bison Association New & Renewing Members

- **Susan Maass**
- **Hillrose, CO.**
  
- **Raymond & Debra Thieman**
- **Limon, CO.**
  
- **Marty Reeves**
- **West Des Moines, IA**
  
- **Rodney Sather**
- **Vivian, SD**
  
- **Dean & Julie Reddig**
- **Lustre. MT**
  
- **Timothy Doyle**
- **Hall, MT**

## Bison Calendar of Events

*From The National Bison Association*

- 11/3/2021 - Maxwell Wildlife Refuge Annual Bison Auction - KS
- 11/6/2021 - National Bison Day - US
- 11/6/2021 - Custer State Park Annual Bison Auction - SD
- 11/8/2021 - Antelope Island State Park Production Auction - UT
- 11/13/2021 - Oklahoma Bison Association Fall Auction - OK
- 11/17/2021 - Prairie Monarch Bison Ranch Bred Female Online Auction - WY
- 11/20/2021 - Coyote Trail Buffalo Ranch Production Simulcast Auction - SD

- 11/21/2021 - Canadian Bison Association Convention, Show and Sale - SK
- 11/22/2021 - TNC Tallgrass Prairie Preserve Fall Bison Auction - OK
- 11/26/2021 - Minn. Bison Association's Bison Fundamentals Workshop - MN
- 11/27/2021 - Minn. Bison Association's Legends of the Fall Auction - MN
- 11/28/2021 - Rocking P Ranch Annual Production Simulcast Auction - SD
- 12/4/2021 - Kansas Bison Association Sale - KS
- 12/4/2021 - Western Bison Association Conference & Auction - UT
- 12/7/2021 - Northern Range Buffalo Simulcast Auction - SD
- 1/1/2022 - Prairie Legends Bison Webcast Auction - Online
- 1/7/2022 - Montana Bison Association Winter Conference - MT
- 1/8/2022 - Turner Bison Exchange Prairie Performance Auction - SD
- 1/19/2022 - National Bison Association Winter Conference - CO
- 1/22/2022 - NBA Gold Trophy Show and Sale - CO
- 2/12/2022 - Dakota Dynamite Buffalo Simulcast Sale - SD
- 2/19/2022 - Dakota Territory Buffalo Association Simulcast Auction - SD
- 2/26/2022 - Beltway Bison Consignment Live Bison Auction - PA
- 3/04/2022 - Rocky Mountain Bison Association's Spring Conference - TBD
- 7/12/2022 - International Bison Conference - Saskatoon, SK

