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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Protecting bison is important

Dear Custer Gallatin National Forest,

There is a need to change the Forest Plan to identify wild buffalo as a Species of Conservation Concern and Focal Species.

1. The best available scientific information supports placing wild buffalo on the list of Species of Conservation Concern to be decided by the Regional Forester. Buffalo qualify as a species of conservation concern and the Custer Gallatin should recognize this fact in the agency's Forest Plan.
2. The best available scientific information supports evaluating and identifying wild buffalo as a Focal Species in the Forest Plan.

Buffalo are an ideal focal species for monitoring grassland and watershed health, fire, and diversity of native plant and animal species. The Custer Gallatin should recognize buffalo as a focal species in the Forest Plan. I believe the Yellowstone area twice a year and would be much more likely to spend more time in the national forests if bison weren't gunned down when they left Yellowstone. I've witnessed that and that is a pathetic way to "manage" our national symbol. They should be protected and live year-round throughout the forests until their populations become self-sustaining and aren't reliant on in-migration from Yellowstone National Park.

Thanks in advance,

Jonathan Way
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Please visit my websites: (1) Eastern Coyote/Coywolf Research (<http://www.easterncoyoterresearch.com/>) where you can purchase my books Suburban Howls and My Yellowstone Experience, read peer-reviewed Publications, and support creating a wildlife watching refuge in the town of Barnstable; (2) My Yellowstone Experience which details my experiences viewing the spectacular hydrothermal features, scenery, and wildlife within Yellowstone National Park; and (3) Coywolf which focuses on describing the hybrid origin of eastern coyotes/coyowolves.