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Comments:

First, the best available science weighs in favor of listing American bison as a species of conservation concern because there is "substantial concern about the species' capability to persist over the long term" on the National Forest. The decision belongs to Region 1's Regional Forester (Dave Schmid is currently the interim forester).

Allocating buffalo habitat to cattle, permitting fencing schemes that impede connectivity to habitat, and setting up government traps are stressors and factors supporting the listing of American bison as a species of conservation concern (PDF).

Second, the Custer Gallatin National Forest is revising the agency's forest plan that will determine how wild buffalo and their habitat are managed for decades to come.

The Custer Gallatin recently released a Draft Environmental Impact Statement outlining a range of alternatives on wild buffalo.

I am writing in support of strengthening provisions in Alternative D by setting strong standards rather than weak guidelines to achieve the "desired condition" of viable, self-sustaining herds of wild buffalo on the National Forest.

Reintroducing fire as a natural force in expanding and improving habitat, removing impediments to migration, securing habitat connectivity across the buffalo's range, are a sample of the procedures we can put in place for the buffalo.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jodi Rodar