

IT'S TIME FOR WILD BISON

On the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge

NO PUBLIC WILD BISON IN MONTANA

Not by the legal definition of "wild":
Most Montana bison are private livestock.



Yellowstone bison: seasonal visitors, managed by the Dept. of Livestock (DoL) in Montana.

Native American bison are not public, managed by sovereign nations, in various ways.

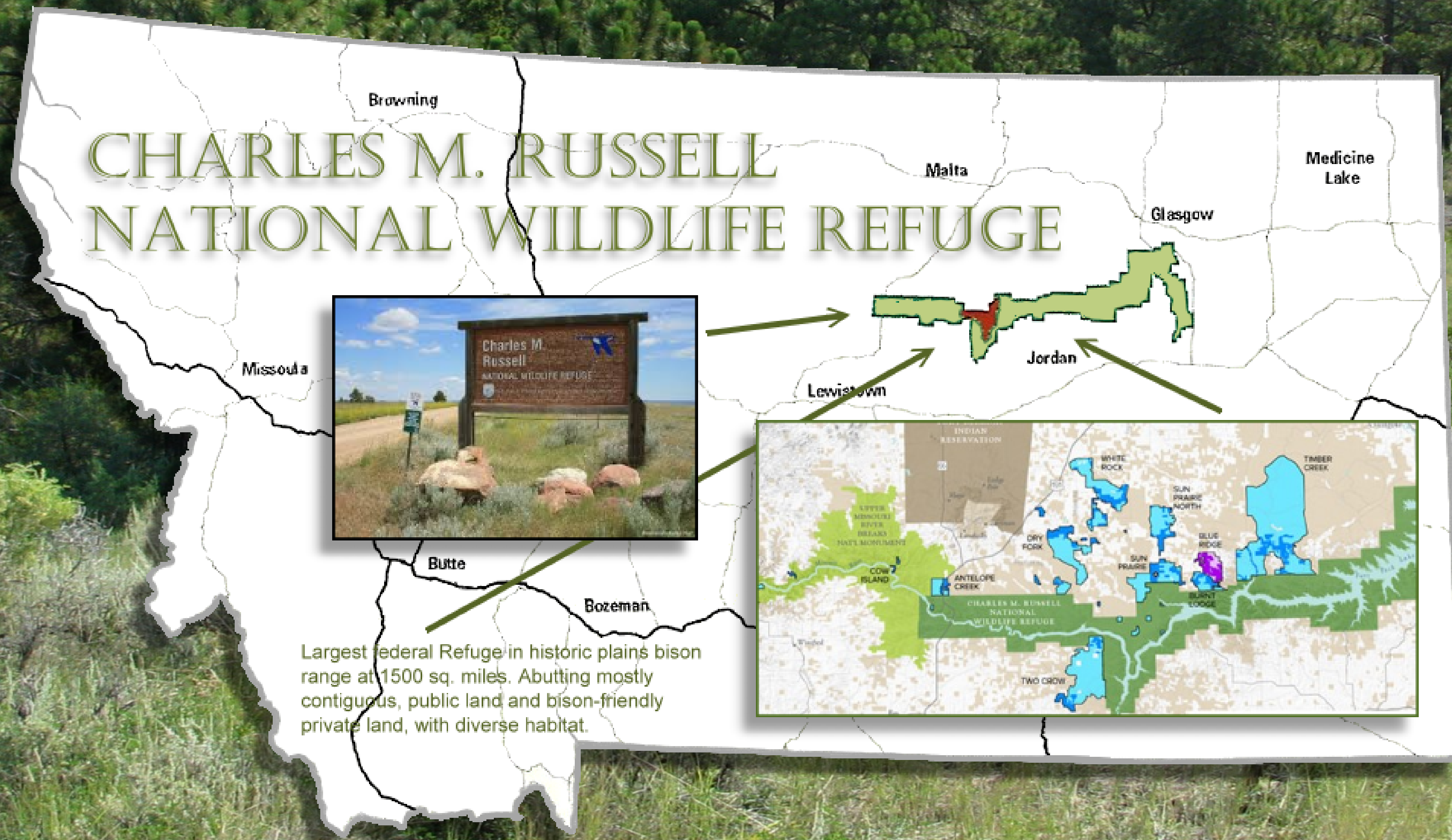
Not by a biological definition of "wild":

"With a preponderance of natural selection, over artificial selection and genetic drift that simplify, disorganize the wild genome."

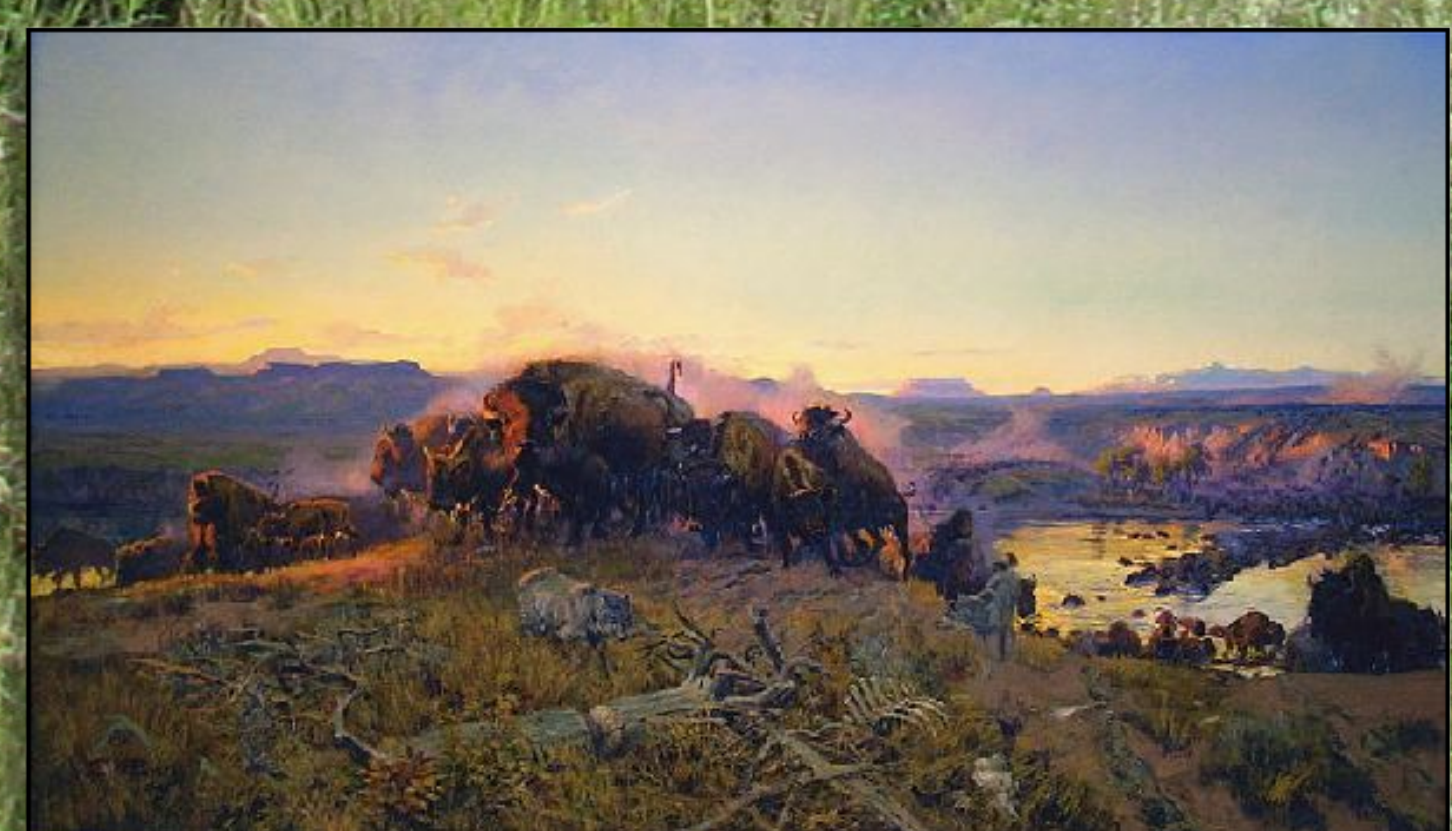
Wildness requires at least 1000 bison, on at least 100 sq. miles of ecologically diverse habitat. Allows bison to use their evolved abilities of mobility and variable habitat selection.

Public Opinion: During 2011 – 2014, three independent polls showed around 70% of Montana voters support bison restoration on the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge.

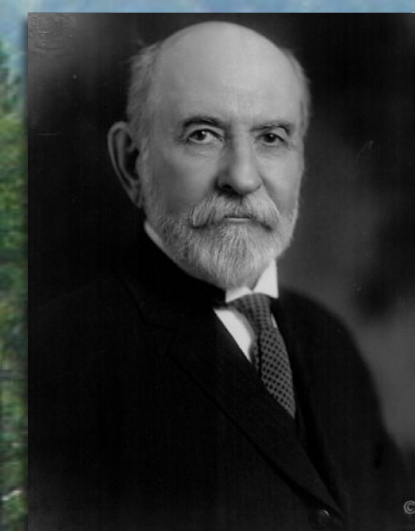
The Refuge long-range plan welcomes bison restoration, defers to Montana for implementation.



Largest federal Refuge in historic plains bison range at 1500 sq. miles. Abutting mostly contiguous, public land and bison-friendly private land, with diverse habitat.



BISON HISTORY



1910
William Hornaday of the Smithsonian Museum, requests Congress to establish a wildlife preserve on the south shore of the Missouri River, in Montana. He is defeated by the Montana Woolgrowers Association.



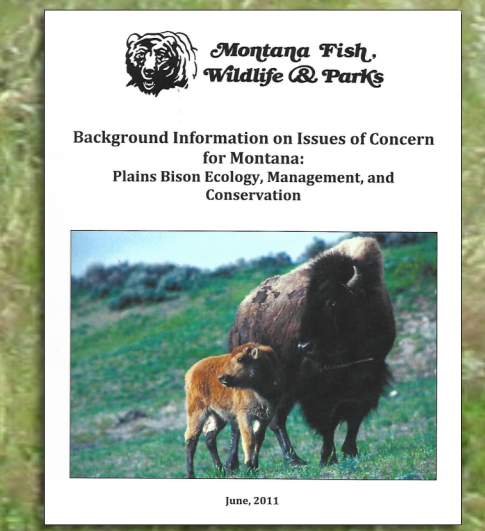
2001
Fred Knowles evaluates sites for bison restoration in Montana. Three sites are on the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge. Report is submitted to Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks. Nothing happens.



2011
New CMR Comprehensive Conservation Plan welcomes bison restoration, noting that the Refuge goal to restore ecological processes will be incomplete without bison. However, Refuge defers to MT to reintroduce bison.



2011-2015
MT FWP initiates environmental impact statement for bison restoration; appoints discussion group, holds 12 public meetings withdraws 1 draft plan, changes project leader, collects public comments. Project is inactivated, public comments not available – results: only a review of issues.



2017 & 2019
Montana legislature produces bills that would inhibit or prohibit any restoration of public, wild bison in MT. Governor Bullock vetoes these bills.



2021
Will be a critical year with a new Governor, for any possible restoration of public, wild bison in MT.