



# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:

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InterTribal Bison Council

Mr. Ervin Carlson, President  
InterTribal Buffalo Council  
2497 West Chicago Street  
Rapid City, South Dakota 57702

Dear Mr. Carlson:

I would like to express my appreciation for your patience during the past year as the National Park Service (NPS) has carefully considered the issues you raised in your September 10, 2010, letter to Director Jon Jarvis, and subsequently discussed by us on a conference call in early November 2010.

Former Deputy Director Dan Wenk and I hosted a meeting in November 2010, that included all ten NPS units with bison management situations, including Badlands National Park, Chickasaw National Recreation Area, Grand Canyon National Park, Grand Teton National Park, Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve, Theodore Roosevelt National Park, Wind Cave National Park, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve, and Yellowstone National Park. At this meeting, we discussed the historic context of bison conservation by the NPS, the current state of affairs amongst these ten units, and the future of conservation of bison as wildlife.

As you are aware, President Obama has launched the America's Great Outdoors (AGO) Initiative <<http://americasgreatoutdoors.gov>> to develop a 21<sup>st</sup> Century conservation and recreation agenda. AGO takes as its premise that lasting conservation solutions should rise from the American people – that the protection of our natural heritage is a non-partisan objective shared by all Americans. AGO recognizes that many of the best ideas come from outside of Washington. Instead of dictating policies, this initiative turns to communities for local, grassroots conservation initiatives. Instead of growing bureaucracy, it calls for reworking inefficient policies and making the Federal Government a better partner with states, tribes, and local communities.

In concert with AGO, in August 2011, the NPS released A Call to Action to inspire the Agency towards its centennial anniversary in 2016 <<http://www.nps.gov/calltoaction>>. This "Call to Action" commits the agency to exemplary stewardship and public enjoyment of the National Park System; to promote the contributions that national parks and our community assistance programs make to create jobs, strengthen local economies, and support ecosystem services; and to integrate our mission across parks and programs and use their collective power to leverage resources and expand our contributions to society. The Call to Action includes a call to "Return the American bison, one of the nation's iconic species, to our country's landscape. To achieve this we will restore and sustain three wild free-roaming bison populations across the central and

western United States in collaboration with tribes, private landowners, and other public land management agencies.”

Accordingly, we are reviewing our service-wide bison resource responsibilities, towards conservation management of bison as wildlife consistent with the scope of respective unit authorities, and innovative collaborative partnerships with federal, tribal, state, local governments, non-government organizations, and private landowners; so as to restore bison as wildlife to their evolved ecological and cultural role on appropriate landscapes.

We look forward to working with you and the InterTribal Buffalo Council towards developing a stronger partnership for the conservation of bison. I have requested Dr. Glenn Plumb, NPS Chief Wildlife Biologist (970-267-7203, [glenn\\_plumb@nps.gov](mailto:glenn_plumb@nps.gov)) to meet with you and ITBC soon to initiate new conversations towards these outcomes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Herbert C. Frost". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "H" and "C".

Herbert C. Frost, Ph.D.  
Associate Director  
Natural Resource Stewardship and Science