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*Beadwork, with the likeness of a buffalo, dangles from a rearview mirror in a vehicle used by the Wind River Tribal Buffalo Initiative during the buffalo release at the Eastern Shoshone Buffalo Enclosure on Friday, April 11, 2025, on the Wind River Reservation near Morton, Wyo. (AP Photo/Amber Baesler)*

## **Wildlife, not livestock: Why the Eastern Shoshone in Wyoming are reclassifying buffaloes**

Jason Baldes drove down a dusty, sagebrush highway earlier this month, pulling 11 young buffalo in a trailer up from Colorado to the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming. His blue truck has painted on the side a drawing of buffalo and a calf. As the executive director of the Wind River Buffalo Initiative and Eastern Shoshone tribal member, he's helped grow the number of buffalo on the reservation for the last decade. The latest count: the Northern Arapaho tribe have 97 and the Eastern Shoshone have 118.

"Tribes have an important role in restoring buffalo for food sovereignty, culture and nutrition, but also for overall bison recovery," he said.

The Eastern Shoshone this month voted to classify buffalo as wildlife instead of livestock as a way to treat them more like elk or deer rather than like cattle. Because the two tribes share the same landbase, the Northern Arapaho are expected to vote on the distinction as well. The vote indicates a growing interest to both restore buffalo on the landscape and challenge the relationship between animal and product.

While climate change isn't the main driver behind the push to restore buffalo wildlife status, the move could bring positive effects to the fight against global warming. Climate change is shrinking Wyoming's glaciers, contributing to drought, and increasing wildfires. While buffalo might give off comparable emissions to cows, increasing biodiversity can promote drought resistance and some herds of buffalo have been shown to help the earth store more carbon.

Like cows, buffalo emit methane, a powerful greenhouse gas, by belching, though it's not clear if buffalo give off the same levels.

While buffalo can contribute to climate change, what they bring in increased biodiversity can promote drought resistance and some buffalo herds have been shown to help store carbon.

The scale of cattle on the landscape and how they are managed contributes to climate change. Baldes argues buffalo should be able to roam on the plains to bolster biodiversity and restore ecological health of the landscape — but that has to come with a change in relationship.

"Buffalo as wildlife allows the animals to exist on the landscape," Baldes said. "Rather than livestock based on economic and Western paradigms."

During the western expansion of settlers a combination of overhunting, habitat destruction, and government policy aimed at killing Indigenous peoples food supplies eradicated the animal from the landscape.

Around eight million buffalo were in the United States in 1870 and then in the span of 20 years there were less than 500. Today, in North America there are roughly 20,000 wild plains bison — like the ones Baldes works to put on the Wind River. But most buffalo reside in privately owned operations, where many buffalo are raised for the growing bison meat industry. In 2023, around 85,000 bison were processed for meat consumption in the United States, compared to the 36 million head of cattle. It's not a lot compared to cattle but some producers see buffalo as an interesting new addition to the global meat market.

The numbers are similar for other kinds of wildlife — there are typically more livestock on the land than wildlife. According to one study, if all the livestock of the world were weighed, the livestock would be 30 times heavier than the weight of all the wildlife on the Earth.

Wildlife is broadly defined as all living organisms, like plants and animals that exist outside the direct control of humans. When it comes to how different states define wildlife, the definition can vary. But a good rule of thumb is animals that are not domesticated — as in selectively bred for human consumption or companionship — are typically classified as wildlife.

“Bison have a complex history since their near extinction over 100 years ago,” said Lisa Shipley, a professor at Washington State University who studies management of wild ungulates which are large mammals with hooves that include buffalo. Tribes and locals tend to say buffalo while scientists use bison to describe the animal. During the western expansion of settlers a combination of overhunting, habitat destruction, and government policy aimed at killing Indigenous peoples food supplies eradicated the animal from the landscape.

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Reducing the world's collective reliance on cows — a popular variety of livestock — has been a way many see as a path forward to combating climate change. Eating less beef and dairy products can be good for the planet; cows account for around 10 percent of green house gas emissions. And having too many cows on a small patch of pasture can have negative effects on the environment by causing soil erosion and affecting the amount of carbon the land can absorb.

Buffalo are good to have on a landscape because they tend to move around if given enough room. One study saw that cattle spent half their time grazing, while buffalo only around a quarter of the time — buffalo even moved faster and had an affinity for more varieties of grasses to munch on. But even buffalo can damage the landscape if they are managed like cattle.

“Too many animals on the landscape can lead to rangeland degradation and health concerns,” said Justin Binfet, wildlife management coordinator for Wyoming Game and Fish Department. The state has classified the buffalo as both livestock and wildlife, which means they can be privately owned or managed in conservation herds. However, different places in the state have different rules regarding the animal. Currently, Wyoming issues around 70 buffalo hunting tags a year.

The National Park Service manages the oldest untouched population of buffalo in Yellowstone National Park, which includes portions of Wyoming, Montana and Idaho. [Montana has sued park officials over their buffalo management plan](#), citing potential negative effects as the park grows the herd and aims to let the buffalo push the boundaries in the park like other wildlife do.

The Montana Stockgrowers Association – a group that advocates for the sale of beef – [said the Yellowstone management plan](#) for buffalo “did not adequately represent all management options that should be considered” like more population control and increased tribal hunting.

Ranchers in Wyoming and Montana, including tribal members who raise cattle, often cite the disease brucellosis as a reason to keep buffalo and cattle strictly away from each other. The management plan for buffalo says that there has not been a recorded case of bison-to-cattle disease.

Wyoming has a history of contesting tribal hunting rights. In a 2019 U.S. Supreme Court case, [Herrera vs. Wyoming](#), the court ruled in favor of treaty-protected hunting rights within the state. But how this history will intersect with buffalo’s classification as wildlife remains to be seen.

On the Wind River Reservation, the tribes have control of wildlife management and hunting regulations. The choice to designate buffalo as wildlife is a matter of tribal sovereignty.

For Baldes, he wants to eventually hunt buffalo like someone would any other wildlife. He’s in the process of buying property to allow buffalo to roam like they did before the arrival of settlers. He doesn’t like when people call the Wind River Buffalo Initiative a “ranch,” because it has too much of an association with cows and cattle. He says buffalo should be treated as they were before settler contact.

“Bringing the buffalo back is about our relationship with them, not domination over them,” Baldes said.

for reat pics: [https://apnews.com/article/wyoming-buffalo-wildlife-cattle-048e8c6f7d7bac94d6035f3b967df873?](https://apnews.com/article/wyoming-buffalo-wildlife-cattle-048e8c6f7d7bac94d6035f3b967df873?user_email=e073fe83cf6e594f0fa68c85167471226da0e93d55247b60e6f1153aa19d8ac8)

[user\\_email=e073fe83cf6e594f0fa68c85167471226da0e93d55247b60e6f1153aa19d8ac8](https://apnews.com/article/wyoming-buffalo-wildlife-cattle-048e8c6f7d7bac94d6035f3b967df873?user_email=e073fe83cf6e594f0fa68c85167471226da0e93d55247b60e6f1153aa19d8ac8)

EDITOR’S NOTE: This story is a collaboration between The Associated Press and Grist.



*A buffalo, relocated from the Soapstone Prairie in Colorado, wanders in its new home at the Eastern Shoshone Buffalo Enclosure, Friday, April 11, 2025, on the Wind River Reservation near Morton, Wyo. (AP Photo/Amber Baesler)*

*Yahoo News*

**How the hostility towards American Indians has lessened during the past 200-plus years** By Levi Rickert October 03, 2029 (Editor seems to not have caught this)

*Editor's Note: This article was previously published in Native News Online on prior Presidents' Days. It was updated to include works concerning American Indians made by the current president of the United States.*

Today(*a while back*), some tribal offices and federal government offices are closed to commemorate Presidents' Day.

American Indians have a different worldview than do non-Indians of the federal government including American presidents. That is not to say, American Indians are anti-American or even anti-government. This is evidenced by the large percentage of American Indians who [serve in the United States military](#).

However, given what American Indians have had to endure in the United States, understandably many view history through a different lens. This is true of even how the men who have been president of the United States are viewed by Native people. The following quotes about American Indians are from various presidents since President George Washington and up to President Joe Biden. The quotes here do not include all presidents. However, there are quotes from every president since President Franklin Roosevelt.

Perhaps reading this will give you a sense of **how the hostility towards American Indians has lessened during the past 200-plus years**. Just as federal policies toward American Indians have changed, so too have attitudes by presidents.

Here's a brief history of presidential remarks about Native Americans and here's to hoping that someday soon we can add a quote from a president of American Indian, Alaska Native or Native Hawaiian heritage.

"Indians and wolves are both beasts of prey, tho' they differ in shape."  
George Washington

"If ever we are constrained to lift the hatchet against any tribe, we will never lay it down till that tribe is exterminated, or driven beyond the Mississippi... in war, they will kill some of us; we shall destroy them all."  
Thomas Jefferson

"My original convictions upon this subject have been confirmed by the course of events for several years, and experience is every day adding to their strength. That those tribes cannot exist surrounded by our settlements and in continual contact with our citizens is certain. They have neither the intelligence, the industry, the moral habits, nor the desire of improvement which are essential to any favorable change in their condition. Established in the midst of another and a superior race, and without appreciating the causes of their inferiority or seeking to control them, they must necessarily yield to the force of circumstances and ere long disappear."

Andrew Jackson

"Ordered that of the Indians and Half-breeds sentenced to be hanged by the military commission, composed of Colonel Crooks, Lt. Colonel Marshall, Captain Grant, Captain Bailey, and Lieutenant Olin, and lately sitting in Minnesota, you cause to be executed on Friday the nineteenth day of December, instant, the following names, to wit... " - Text from order made by President Lincoln to General Sibley ordering the execution of American Indians in Minnesota.  
Abraham Lincoln

"I don't go so far as to think that the only good Indians are dead Indians, but I believe nine out of ten are, and I shouldn't like to inquire too closely into the case of the tenth."  
Theodore Roosevelt

"All of our people all over the country - except the pure blooded Indians - are immigrants or descendants of immigrants, including even those who came over here on the Mayflower."  
Franklin Roosevelt

"The United States, which would live on Christian principles with all of the peoples of the world, cannot omit a fair deal for its own Indian citizens."  
Harry Truman

"There has been a vigorous acceleration of health, resource and education programs designed to advance the role of the American Indian in our society. Last Fall, for example, 91 percent of the Indian children between the ages of 6 and 18 on reservations were enrolled in school. This is a rise of 12 percent since 1953."  
Dwight Eisenhower

"For a subject worked and reworked so often in novels, motion pictures, and television, American Indians remain probably the least understood and most misunderstood Americans of us all."J  
John Kennedy

"The American Indian, once proud and free, is torn now between White and tribal values; between the politics and language of the White man and his own historic culture. His problems, sharpened by years of defeat and exploitation, neglect and inadequate effort, will take many years to overcome."  
Lyndon Johnson

"What we have done with the American Indian is in its way as bad as what we imposed on the Negroes. We took a proud and independent race and virtually destroyed them. We have to find ways to bring them back into decent lives in this country."  
Richard Nixon

"I am committed to furthering the self-determination of Indian communities but without terminating the special relationship between the Federal Government and the Indian people. I am

strongly opposed to termination. Self-determination means that you can decide the nature of your tribe's relationship with the Federal Government within the framework of the Self-Determination Act, which I signed in January of 1975."

Gerald Ford

"It is the fundamental right of every American, as guaranteed by the first amendment of the Constitution, to worship as he or she pleases ... This legislation sets forth the policy of the United States to protect and preserve the inherent right of American Indian, Eskimo, Aleut, and Native Hawaiian people to believe, express, and exercise their traditional religions."

as he signed into law the American Indian Religious Freedom Act.

Jimmy Carter

"Let me tell you just a little something about the American Indian in our land. We have provided millions of acres of land for what are called preservations - or reservations, I should say. They, from the beginning, announced that they wanted to maintain their way of life, as they had always lived there in the desert and the plains and so forth. And we set up these reservations so they could, and have a Bureau of Indian Affairs to help take care of them. At the same time, we provide education for them - schools on the reservations. And they're free also to leave the reservations and be American citizens among the rest of us, and many do. Some still prefer, however, that way - that early way of life. And we've done everything we can to meet their demands as to how they want to live. Maybe we made a mistake. Maybe we should not have humored them in that wanting to stay in that kind of primitive lifestyle. Maybe we should have said, no, come join us; be citizens along with the rest of us."

Ronald Reagan

"This government-to-government relationship is the result of sovereign and independent tribal governments being incorporated into the fabric of our Nation, of Indian tribes becoming what our courts have come to refer to as quasi-sovereign domestic dependent nations. Over the years the relationship has flourished, grown, and evolved into a vibrant partnership in which over 500 tribal governments stand shoulder to shoulder with the other governmental units that form our Republic."

George Herbert Walker Bush

"Let us rededicate ourselves to the principle that all Americans have the tools to make the most of their God-given potential. For Indian tribes and tribal members, this means that the authority of tribal governments must be accorded the respect and support to which they are entitled under the law. It means that American Indian children and youth must be provided a solid education and the opportunity to go on to college. It means that more must be done to stimulate tribal economies, create jobs, and increase economic opportunities."

Bill Clinton

"Tribal sovereignty means that. It's sovereign. You're a... you're a... you've been given sovereignty and you're viewed as a sovereign entity."

George W. Bush

"We also recommit to supporting tribal self-determination, security, and prosperity for all Native Americans. While we cannot erase the scourges or broken promises of our past, we will move ahead together in writing a new, brighter chapter in our joint history."

Barack Obama

"You were here long before any of us were here. Although we have a representative in Congress who they say was here a long time ago. They call her 'Pocahontas.'

Donald Trump

"The federal government has long broken promises to Native American tribes who have been on this land since time immemorial. With her appointment, Congresswoman Haaland will help me strengthen the nation-to-nation relationship."

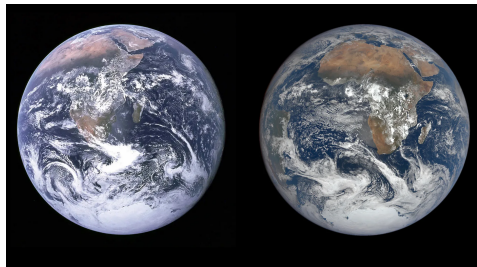
Joe Biden

"Considering the Lumbee Tribe's historical and modern significance, it is the policy of the United States to support the full Federal recognition, including the authority to receive full Federal benefits, of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina,"

--

Donald Trump, passing the process back to the Department of the Interior

<https://nativenewsonline.net/currents/us-presidents-in-their-own-words-concerning-american-indians>



BBC

### **How 50 Years of Climate Change Has Changed the Face of the 'Blue Marble' From Space**

The "Blue Marble" was the first photograph of the whole Earth and the only one ever taken by a human. Fifty years on, new images of the planet reveal visible changes to the Earth's surface.

[https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20250422-how-50-years-of-climate-change-has-changed-the-face-of-the-blue-marble?utm\\_source=firefox-newtab-en-us](https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20250422-how-50-years-of-climate-change-has-changed-the-face-of-the-blue-marble?utm_source=firefox-newtab-en-us)

### **Interior Department gives broad powers to DOGE-tied official**

Interior Secretary Doug Burgum on Thursday gave sweeping authority to an official with ties to Elon Musk's Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE).

Read in The Hill: <https://apple.news/Atyc41mByQku66r02YUVJxw>

**Brentwood OKs tribal acknowledgement:** The City Council and planning commission will soon begin meetings, making a statement that they know parks and other buildings are **located on land once inhabited by Indigenous communities.**



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A horse therapy program in Namibia brings joy to children with learning disabilities  
One woman in the southern African country of Namibia has found a way to [harness the power and gentleness of horses](#) to help children with learning disabilities and conditions like attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder and autism.

### Student loans in default to be referred to debt collection

Beginning May 5, the Education Department will begin involuntary collection on student loans that are in default, including the garnishing of wages for potentially millions of borrowers, officials said Monday. Currently, roughly 5.3 million borrowers are in default on their federal student loans. [Read more.](#)

#### Why this matters:

- Borrowers who don't make payments for nine months go into default, which is reported on their credit scores and can go to collections. Along with the borrowers already in default, around another 4 million are 91 to 180 days late on their loan payments. Less than 40% of all borrowers are current on their student loans, department officials said.
- The Trump administration's announcement marks an end to a period of leniency that began during the COVID-19 pandemic. No federal student loans have been referred for collection since March 2020, including those in default. "American taxpayers will no longer be forced to serve as collateral for irresponsible student loan policies," Education Secretary Linda McMahon said.
- Under President Joe Biden, the Education Department tried multiple times to give broad forgiveness of student loans, only to be stopped by courts. The decision to send debt to collections drew criticism from advocates, who said borrowers had experienced whiplash and confusion with the changing student loan policies between the Biden and Trump administrations.

#### **From NARF** (*rec'd 4.22 after Journal went out*)

National monuments are precious places that [preserve our heritage and can improve our lives](#). Americans across all political parties and demographics support these shared spaces, with more visitors coming to them every year. Native American people and Tribal Nations often lead the way in seeking national monument protections for our sacred places and homelands. These are ancestral lands that were taken during colonization and now are held by the United States government.

Despite their popularity, these lands now are under threat under the guise of a fictional "energy emergency." Any action to open these lands for corporate development only serves to increase

the profits of a few while devastating places immensely important to not just Native people but the entire world.

We must prioritize protecting these lands and the cultures that they nourish.

Take action this Earth Day and partner with NARF and Tribal nations to protect these sacred lands. Show up, speak out, and donate.

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Wednesday, April 23 1:00-2:15 P.M. MT/3:00-4:15 P.M. ET

Our partners at [Workforce Matters](#) are hosting a listening session on **Wednesday, April 23**, to hear from Native-led tribal programs and organizations providing workforce development services and programs. Please register to participate, and you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

The purpose of this call is to understand how executive orders and shifting policies at the federal level are impacting tribal led programs and Native-led organizations. *What challenges are you facing? What support do you need the most right now as you navigate this period of uncertainty?* By better understanding the challenges tribal leaders and program leaders are facing, the Workforce Matters team can determine how they can be most helpful during this time.

[Take the Survey](#)

[Register Now](#)

Additionally, Workforce Matters has created a 3–5-minute survey to learn more about Tribal program needs. They will give a \$20 gift card to the first 20 respondents to the survey.

### [Lombardo asks Trump to back away from lithium tariffs](#)

Nevada Governor Joe Lombardo has requested President Donald Trump to eliminate tariffs on lithium imported from China. [Read more...](#)

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### [Books for Congress](#)

[Today, the Library of Congress celebrates its birthday. On April 24, 1800, President John Adams approved the appropriation of \\$5,000 for the purchase of “such books as may be necessary for the use of congress.”](#)

The books, the first purchased for the [Library of Congress](#), were ordered from London and arrived in 1801. The collection of 740 volumes and three maps was stored in the [U.S. Capitol](#),

the Library's first home. On January 26, 1802, President [Thomas Jefferson](#) approved the first [legislation](#) that defined the role and functions of the new institution.

[The Library of Congress, Washington. c1900. Detroit Publishing Company.](#) Prints & Photographs Division

*The Library of Congress is the nation's oldest federal cultural institution and serves as the research arm of Congress. The Library's mission is to make its resources available and useful to the Congress and the American people, and to sustain and preserve a universal collection of knowledge and creativity for future generations. As of 2023, the vast holdings of the Library number over 178.2 million items.*

[Construction of the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. April 19, 1893.](#) Levin C. Handy, photographer, April 19, 1893. [Panoramic Photographs.](#) Prints & Photographs Division  
[Ainsworth Rand Spofford](#), Librarian of Congress from 1864 to 1897, was responsible for transforming the Library into an institution of national significance in the Jeffersonian spirit. Appointed by [Abraham Lincoln](#), Spofford centralized the registration and deposit of copyright activities through the Copyright Law of 1870. This law had a direct effect on vastly increasing the Library's collections as it extended copyright protection to "...a painting, drawing, statue, statuary, model or design for a work of the fine arts, a photograph of the same..." and stipulated that two copies of every published work in the U.S.—books, pamphlets, maps, prints, photographs, and pieces of music registered for copyright—be deposited at the Library. He also linked the legislative and national functions of the Library—first in practice, next by law—through his reorganization of the institution, which was approved by Congress in 1897.

