



PRESS RELEASE

Poll Shows Strong Support for Restoring Bison in Montana

Contact: Kit Fischer, 406-541-6731 or 241-3121

Missoula, MT —The National Wildlife Federation today released the results of a recent poll by the polling firm Moore Information that shows strong support for re-establishing wild bison populations in several areas of the state.

Nearly three out of four Montanans support having the Montana Department of Fish Wildlife and Parks restore bison populations to the 26,000 acre state-owned Spotted Dog wildlife management area near Deer Lodge and the 1.1 million acres Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge in central Montana.

“There’s been a lot of discussion about bison and we thought we check in on what Montanans thought,” said Tom France, Regional Executive Director for NWF. “What we found is that Montanans overwhelmingly want to see wild bison restored to this great state.”

Among other findings, the poll showed that:

- 63% of Montanans believe that it is possible to manage wild bison in much same ways as other wildlife species such as deer and elk.
- 70% of Montanans favor having the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and parks investigate where wild bison populations could be restored.
- 70% of Montanans favor allowing hunters to hunt wild bison
- 72% s of Montanans support establishing a bison population at the 26,000 acre Spotted Dog Wildlife Management Area, near Deerlodge
- 70% of Montanans support establishing a population of wild bison in and around the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge in north-central Montana.

“To this end,” said Tim Aldrich, President of the Montana Wildlife Federation, “it supports MT FWP investigations of possible locations for future bison populations, in part because they, like all other species of wildlife, belong on our landscapes and would support continuing positive economic results through tourism and hunting.”

“We believe these polling results really show the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Commission was headed the right direction when they voted to write a bison management plan in January,” said France, Regional Executive Director for the National Wildlife Federation. The public really wants to see wild bison populations re-established in Montana and the plan will tell us where and how.”

The survey was conducted February 23-24, 2011 by Moore Information, Inc. a national public opinion research company. Telephone interviews were conducted among a representative sample of 400 registered voters statewide. Random Digit Dialing and probability sampling methods were used to select potential respondents, and respondents were screened to include only those who are registered to vote in the State. The potential sampling error associated with the 400 statewide interviews is +/-5% at the 95% confidence level. This means that if the survey were conducted 100 times, the results would fall within that plus or minus range 95 of the 100 times.