



NEWS RELEASE

National Bison Range



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Seasonal Changes at the National Bison Range

Even though the forecast calls for the summer heat to continue, we are heading towards the Labor Day Weekend and into autumn. And as the seasons change, other changes can be expected at the National Bison Range.

One of the most noticeable changes is the shortening of days, with evening coming earlier and earlier. This is reflected in the Bison Range's new fall hours which start after Labor Day, on Tuesday, September 3, 2013. The Visitor Center will continue to be open daily 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. but times for the scenic drives change. The Refuge will be open from 7 a.m. to dark. The actual closing time will change frequently from 8:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., as the sun sets earlier every day. Visitors will need to begin the Red Sleep Mountain Drive by **6 p.m.** to be able to finish before the main gate closes at dark. This 19-mile, one-way gravel road takes about 1½ to 2 hours to drive. The shorter West Loop and Buffalo Prairie Drives take about 20 to 30 minutes. If you are unsure about the opening or closing times of any of the scenic drives or the Visitor Center, please call (406) 644-2211 for further information.

Visitors should also note that Red Sleep Mountain Drive will close for about a week sometime between October 2 and October 9 to allow staff to move the bison herd. During this time, the Winter Drive will be open for use with no fees charged. Red Sleep Mountain Drive will reopen through the next weekend (with fees back in place) but will close completely for the season after Friday, October 18. Visitor Center hours will also vary during this time frame.

With the change to fall, the days become cooler and nights turn frosty, which in turns brings on more activity among the wildlife. The elk at the Refuge begin bugling in early September and visitors can sometimes catch action between rival bulls. So visit the National Bison Range during this season of change and take Red Sleep Mountain Drive a time or two before it closes for the winter season.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov. Connect with the Service's Mountain-Prairie Region via our Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/USFWSMountainPrairie>, follow our tweets at <http://twitter.com/USFWSMtnPrairie>, download photos from our Flickr page at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/51986662@N05>, and watch our YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/usfws>.