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MONTHLY



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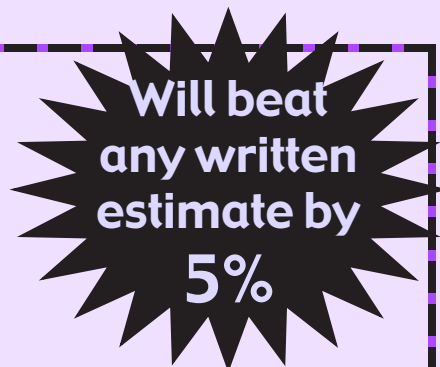
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# How To Save Hummingbirds

By Ariana Marisol, REALfarmacy.com

Hummingbirds are beautiful, delightful little creatures to have around your garden. Not only are they great pollinators, but they also bring fun life into your yard. Many home gardeners will put feeders up to keep these summer personalities around.

If you don't take the necessary steps to provide healthy nectar and clean feeders, your favorite pollinators could catch deadly infections.

Hummingbird feeders must be kept clean and free from mold and fungus, or your tiny friend could develop a serious and deadly fungus infection. This infection causes the tongue to swell, making it impossible for the bird to feed. Losing the ability to consume nectar, the cute little bird faces starvation.

A mother hummingbird can pass a fungal infection to her babies who, in turn, could also face the possibility of dying from starvation due to swelling tongues.

Not changing out the nectar enough could create fermentation within the nectar. Fermented nectar can cause liver damage, which usually will lead to death.

## The Basics of Hummingbird Care

When looking to purchase a feeder, find one that is easy to clean.

To clean your feeder, flush it with hot tap water and use a bottle brush to scrub the sides of the glass jar. DO NOT use soap because it will leave residue behind. If you do use

soap, use a bleach or vinegar and water solution to rinse and remove any soap residue.

Inspect the feeder carefully for black mold. If you see any mold growth, soak the feeder in a solution of 1/4 cup bleach to one gallon water for one hour.

To make the nectar, mix one part ordinary white cane sugar to four parts water. Do not use store bought mixtures, or honey, or any other kind of sugar — just ordinary white cane sugar will work. Bring solution to a boil, stir to dissolve the sugar, then allow the mixture to come to room temperature before filling the feeder.

Boiling the water will help slow the fermentation process of the nectar, but as soon as a hummingbird beak dips and drinks, healthy microorganisms carried on the beak will be transferred into the nectar.

If the nectar becomes cloudy, it has gone bad and needs to be replaced. A sugar solution can spoil in as little as two days. If your feeder is hanging in the sun or outside where the temperatures are high, the nectar may start to ferment in only one day.

To avoid wasting nectar, only put out enough for the birds will consume in two or three days. If you mix up a large batch, you can keep it in the refrigerator for up to two weeks.

*Ariana Marisol is a contributing staff writer for REALfarmacy.com. She is an avid nature enthusiast, gardener, photographer, writer, hiker, dreamer, and lover of all things sustainable, wild, and free.*

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# Under The Greenwood - Renaissance Festival

By Valerie Wedel

Come join us before it is too late!

In our land of Larkspur, Colorado lives the Larkspur Renaissance Festival. **The final weekend of 2019 will be the first weekend of August: August 3rd & 4th, 10 am - 6:30 pm. Take exit 173 from I-25, and follow fair signs.**

Imagine a green, shaded village, with jousting arena at one end. Under the green and leafy shade of wandering lanes are medieval shops with arts and crafts. Perhaps one finds a sundial, small enough to wear on a necklace and tell time with. Perhaps one meets a member of the royal court, or a wandering musician playing ancient airs.

Robin Hood roams the Fair, yew bow in hand. Rubbing elbows with him is Cap'n Jack Sparra, lately come ashore. In place of Will Scarlet, formerly minstrel to Robin Hood, we have our own Lady Halinda, Scythian Nomad Harper. Wandering the Fair, Lady Halinda plays a small harp, won after battle both long and fierce, from a dragon's hoard. Should you spot her, you will note she wears trousers and boots – with which to leap on her trusty nomad pony and hunt with hound and hawk, after the Fair closes each day.

Have you been to the Fair in previous years? If so you know it is never quite the same twice, and yet always magical. Are you considering going for the first time? Here are a few more of the adventures awaiting...

In dappled shade beneath mountain pines, children can joust from the back of a griffin or a dragon – yes, really! (Don't worry; they are quite friendly to children.) There is

a rocking horse as tall as a house, from whose back you can see much of the Fair. Around every wind and bend in the path, there may be something undreamed of, perhaps artwork, perhaps dancers, perhaps a special quality of golden sunlight, filtering through singing trees...

A sanctuary for wild cats – really rare breeds we don't typically get to see here in the Front Range - brings some of their most trustworthy rescued cats to the Fair each summer. A bird of prey rescue group also introduces rescued birds to fairgoers.

Each weekend the Queen's Champion and other knights and squires demonstrate their skill at arms in the jousting arena. The Queen and her court are very fond of visiting with Fair-goers, especially children. This last weekend a mermaid was spotted by the Fair's water wheel, visiting with children and their families.

Are you still wondering what in the world this Fair is?

Our Fair in Larkspur is one of several scattered around the country. During the 1960's and '70's, the first Fairs were created by local artists and history buffs. The goal was recreating Middle Ages in Europe, minus plague, rats or hunger. This was done by a group of people scattered around the country, the Society for Creative Anachronism. During this long ago time, Lady Halinda and her brother Sir Eric (who was still a squire, in those days), lived in the Tree Girt Sea Kingdom, known in modern times as Chicago. They studied ancient crafts and skills, and helped create Festivals, along with many other folk, in TreeGirt Sea.

Then Fairs become linked, one to another. Artisans, musicians, actors and dancers could follow Fairs, one to the next, around the country and around the cycle of seasons throughout the year. This led to amazing skills being developed, and artists, artisans and musicians earning a living doing what they love. At the Larkspur Renaissance festival you will see working artist studios, including glass blowing, metal work, silk painting, clothing design, and more.

Here are thoughts from one of the groups that travel the 'fair circuit': the CRAIC show. This is a band with piper, drummers, and various other

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## Highlander Events

instruments. They combine story telling with wild music, some of it haunting and quiet, some of it stirring and wild. They are both polished and continuously evolving. Daniel O’Ryan, piper with **CRAIC**, shared how he began playing at fairs and why:

“I was in Germany back in 1999, and saw and heard medieval bagpipes. They called them a “Dudelsack.” I was so fascinated with their look and sound that I ordered one from the guy that was playing them. A few years later I started my first band. In 2011 my wife, Tonya and I formed **The CRAIC Show**.

“I love traditional Irish, Renaissance and Medieval music. But I grew up on 80s and 90s heavy metal and rock. I wanted to bring a heavy rock show to the Renaissance Festival. So we asked the question, what if Shakespeare put in a rock show, what would it be like? I hope the answer is **The CRAIC Show!** [This] is the best life in the world!”

“If you’ve never been to a Renaissance Festival, you’re really missing out on an amazing time. The songs, acts and shows people put on at the Faire are hundreds, sometimes thousands of years old, yet still entertaining as ever before. When you are at a Renaissance Faire, you are taking part in a tradition that is as old as civilization itself.

“There is magic there! This is old magic... [it]



takes you out of the world of trouble, bills and mundane existence, and brings you into a world of laughter, art and music. And that is why we named our band **The CRAIC Show**. Craic is a Gaelic word that means all of the above: Good times, good stories, the pure joy of being around your friends and family. That is what the craic means, that is what the **CRAIC Show** is and that is what going to a Renaissance Festival is all about!”

Without us, Fairs would not exist. All Fair folk thank you! Should you tip a wandering musician, you really do help keep their instruments ‘a playin’ !

Should you come by, and if you have been tracking Celtic harp music in Coal Creek Canyon, you may recognize Lady Halinda. Please say hello! Here is her poem for you, this summer day:

May thou never feel old,  
May health, joy and love  
attend thee,  
Beneath the Greenwood trees.

Come thee to the Greenwood,  
Come and be welcome!

*(Photo of Lady Halinda playing her Harp at the Fair, courtesy of Kim Evans.)*



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# Time To Move BLM Out Of D.C.

By Jonathan Thompson June 26 - High Country News

*This article was originally published on **The River of Lost Souls** and is reproduced here with permission.*

Former Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke — who has ridden off into the revolving-door sunset — had a lot of bad ideas and policies.

He thumbed his nose at sovereign tribal nations by shrinking Bears Ears National Monument; he decimated rules to cut methane emissions from the oil and gas industry; he hung the imperiled sage grouse out to dry; he leased out thousands of acres of public land for oil and gas development, with little regard to the cultural and ecological resources at stake. Meanwhile, he squandered Americans' tax money on furniture and vacations.

But amongst all this wrecking of our public lands, Zinke did have one sensible proposal that is poised to be realized in his absence: Moving the Bureau of Land Management headquarters out of Washington, D.C., and into the West, amid the vast acreage that it oversees. It's a smart idea, and one that ultimately will benefit the region and its public lands.

The conservation community is understandably skeptical. After all, the proposal came from Zinke, who managed to embody the worst traits of the worst Interior Secretaries in

U.S. history, from Albert Bacon Fall (corruption, beholden to oil corporations) to James Watt (bigot, disdainful of the 'public' in public land, beholden to oil corporations) to Gale Norton (plagued by scandal, beholden to oil corporations). David Bernhardt, Zinke's successor, is a member of this same dubious club.

It's reasonable to assume, then, that the BLM move is being orchestrated at the behest of the extractive industries, based on the belief that it will tilt the agency in their favor. For example, if the BLM set up shop in Grand Junction, which traditionally has been dependent upon mining and drilling, then the officials at that agency would have an interest in facilitating drilling and mining to economically benefit their community. Meanwhile, by placing the agency in the West, it would give more influence to those politicians who see extraction as the highest use of any and all public land. Some critics even believe that the move is being pushed by the likes of the Koch brothers and the far-right American Legislative Exchange Council as a first step towards mass privatization of public land.

So you may wonder how any rational person could possibly support such a notion, unless they were under the influence of Utah Republican Sen. Mike Lee's mind-altering Jell-O. Here's the answer (and it has nothing to do with Utah's official snack food): I'm not worried about Westerners getting more control over the BLM, because I'm pretty damned sure most Westerners are not ideologically predisposed to lay waste to our public lands. If moving the BLM to the West gives the likes of Rep. Rob Bishop, a Utah Republican who is hostile to the notion of public lands, more control, then it will do the same for sane politicians, such as Democratic Senators Martin Heinrich and Tom Udall from New Mexico or Rep. Raul Grijalva from Arizona. If sagebrush rebels get more influence, so will regional environmental groups that don't have the cash to base people in Washington, D.C. Westerners who are alarmed by the de facto privatization of public lands known as oil and gas leasing can protest not just at their state BLM



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office, but at the national office as well.

And if relocated BLM officials see how drilling benefits the community's economy, they'll also get a firsthand look at how that same drilling can be detrimental to public health and quality of life — and therefore the economy. Grand Junction, one of the top candidates to house the relocated HQ, has been shifting slowly toward an amenities economy ever since the early-1980s oil-shale bust rippled through the community. The Colorado city is banking on its good health care, a decent climate, and access to public lands for recreation to draw new businesses and residents. Unfettered oil and gas development on those same public lands would hamper these efforts.

Meanwhile, the 300 well-paying, relatively stable jobs that come with the office would support the city's move away from an extraction-based economy. That, in turn, could very well shift the political hue in a place where hostility towards federal land managers is prevalent. It's a lot tougher to hate government bureaucrats when they live next door, and when their agency is injecting a bunch of cash into the local economy.

I'd prefer to see the office moved to a more progressive and diverse city, such as Albuquerque, Santa Fe or Tucson. But New Mexico's strong shift to the left in the most recent elections knocked it out of contention, and Tucson is not centrally located enough. Salt Lake City and Denver have also been mentioned as top candidates, but Denver's high housing costs surely will count against it.

Wherever it ends up, moving BLM HQ will render one of the Sagebrush Rebellion's favorite rhetorical memes:



*Grand Junction, Colorado, seen in the valley below the Colorado National Monument, is considered a top contender for the Bureau of Land Management headquarters if it were to be relocated from D.C. to the West. Scott Ingram/CC via Flickr*

The insistence that “their” backyards — i.e. our public lands — are being controlled by an absentee landlord based on the other side of the nation. Now it looks like the “landlord” is going to live among its “tenants.” And I say, “Go West, BLM!”

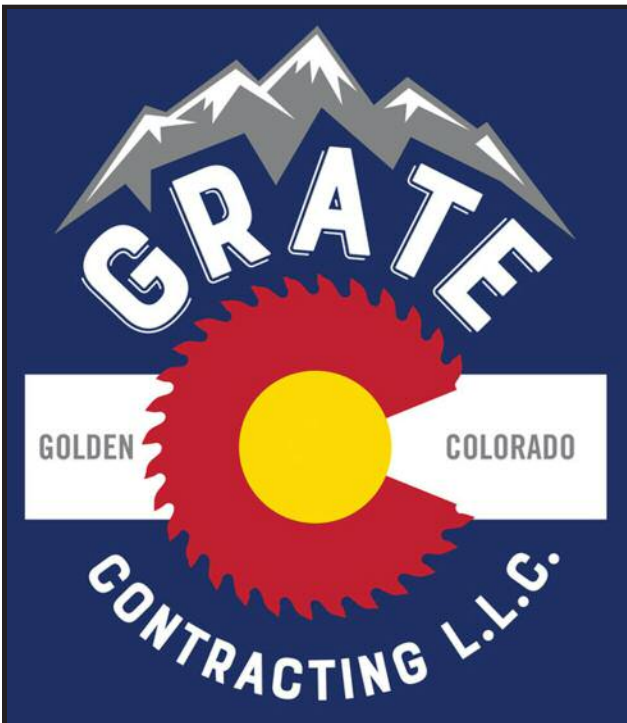
*Jonathan Thompson is a contributing editor at High Country News. He is the author of **River of Lost Souls: The Science, Politics and Greed Behind the Gold King Mine Disaster.***

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# Mother Nature In Charge?

Hello Editor,

I am writing in response to the article “Mountaineers Confront Disappearing Glaciers” by Heather Hansman. The article seems to have been written and published with somewhat of a narrow view of the overall picture pertaining to weather patterns and our most recent record snowfall in Colorado and other states nearby. It only tells of the areas where glaciers have reduced slightly in size recently, and how that is making it difficult for recreational hikers and climbers to access their favorite destinations.

Meanwhile, for the first time since 1995, the Hardrock 100 ultra marathon has been canceled this year because of snow-related interference. “Due to historic snowfall, avalanches, avalanche debris, an inability to reach certain aid stations and uncertain conditions on more than 40% of the course, the 2019 Hardrock Hundred Endurance Run has been cancelled,” an Instagram post from the race reads.

Cold weather forced changes in plans for many campers during Memorial Day weekend. I live in the foothills northwest of Golden where it snowed almost continually for about 5 or 6 days straight just a couple of weeks ago. During that time the temperature didn’t get over 40 degrees at our house. Many popular water rafting and canoeing areas in Colorado are not accessible until the rate of snow melt reduces.

The glaciers will again grow in size later on. You need to realize that Mother Nature is in charge, and that it is she who will determine what is “normal” and not humans.

Pat Searcy

Thank you Pat for taking the time and energy to write to the Highlander (*sorry this didn’t appear in the July issue, we had already gone to press when your letter arrived*).

I printed Heather’s article to inform hikers and climbers that frequent those places she named about the changing conditions, I agree her focus was narrow.

The melting of glaciers is only one small measurement of how our global climate is changing. It is dangerously easy to just chalk those things up to the natural way Mother Nature is in charge of our planetary weather over centuries. What is different in today’s world is the escalating

timeline. To just call what is happening Global Warming is a bit naïve and does not take into account that the number of humans on the planet has increased exponentially and therefore their additional use of fossil fuels is driving climate changes.

Probably the most dangerous of events that will occur from this out of control warming of our climate is just what you described this last winter and spring, drastic weather events: heavier than normal snowfall, flooding, stronger hurricanes. No matter how we sum it up – Mother Nature – Natural Climate Changes – it is all too easy to try and sidestep the real problem and that is overpopulation.

Once human numbers on the planet reached the exponential there is no turning back. All we can do is what each of us can achieve in our daily lives by way of behavioral changes: recycle, drive less and telecommute when possible, use fuel efficient vehicles, eat less meat, buy fewer new clothes, live as minimalistically as we can. Each person can make a difference and I think being prepared as much as possible for catastrophic weather events is one way to cope in our ever changing world. Staying informed and voting for leaders and legislation that don’t ignore science is important too. Editor



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# Record Heat In Alaska Fuels Wildfires

By Susie Cagle - July 9 - High Country News

Update: To put it into perspective: over 1.4 million acres have burned in Alaska out of the total 2,113,793 acres burned for the entire country in 2018. In Alaska, many of these fires started after lightning strikes in the area, according to the latest information from the National Interagency Fire Center situation report on July 15.

More than 4,000 lightning strikes were recorded across Alaska since this Sunday, many of which struck the Interior, according to AK Fire Info. The agency also states there are 30 fires burning in the Upper Yukon Zone, most of which are not a threat to people or property.

Anchorage sees 90 F as nearly 120 fires blaze across the state.

*This article was originally published by Guardian US and is reproduced here as part of the Climate Desk collaboration.*

Record-breaking heat across Alaska is pushing tourists to beaches, and sending flames across the unseasonably hot, dry state.

Anchorage experienced higher than average temperatures nearly every day of June, reaching a balmy 80 Fahrenheit on days that once maxed out at a mild 67.

The weather changed further with temperatures reaching 90 Fahrenheit in Anchorage for the first time ever July 4th. If the forecasts are correct, the state could set several new local heat records in the coming days.

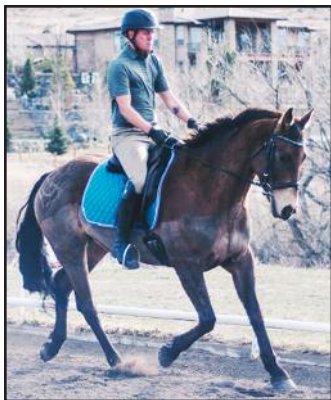
Alaska's heating has a cascading effect. As ocean temperatures rise, the coasts heat up, with potentially catastrophic consequences on land and in the water. And all that local heat contributes to faster planet-wide warming. Alaska is no stranger to large wildfires, and so far this year's fire season is only slightly worse than average. But with about a quarter-million acres burned recently, nearly 120 fires still uncontained, and the heat still rising, authorities aren't taking any chances.

With resources spread thin and fearing further sparks, the state fire marshal's office issued a statewide ban on the sale and personal use of fireworks ahead of the Fourth of July holiday.

Alaska is trapped in a kind of hot feedback loop, as the arctic is heating up much faster than the rest of the planet. Ocean surface temperatures upwards of 10 degrees F hotter than average have helped to warm up the state's coasts. When Bering and Chukchi sea ice collapsed and melted months earlier than normal this spring, the University of Alaska climate specialist Rick Thoman characterized the water as "baking."

"I intentionally try to not be hyperbolic, but what do you say when there's 10- to 20-degree ocean water temperature above normal?" Thoman told the Guardian. "How else do you describe that besides extraordinary?"

The hot water has affected sea birds and marine life, with mass mortality events becoming commonplace in the



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Dozens of towns in Alaska are now or will soon be in need of relocation from eroding land and rising oceans. “Things are changing so rapidly in Alaska right now we just can’t keep up,” said Thoman.

*Susie Cagle is a climate and environment reporter for Guardian US, based in Oakland.*

*A helicopter dips a bucket of water out of pond while an air tanker drops a load of retardant on the Malaspina Fire on*

*Sunday, July 7, 2019.*

*Photo by Ed Soto/Alaska Division of Forestry*

region. The National Park Service characterizes Alaska’s increasingly frequent sea bird die-offs, called “wrecks,” as “extreme.” “The folks in the communities are saying these animals look like they’ve starved to death,” said Thoman. Accelerating ice melt stands to put the state’s coastal communities at risk, reshaping food sources the people rely on and the very land on which they live. Where there are no built roads, Alaskans rely on frozen ground as infrastructure for traveling. Less ice means less of the life that’s evolved to depend on that ice, both animal and human.

“It’s really affecting people’s ability to provide for themselves and their families,” said Brendan Kelly, a University of Alaska marine biology professor and executive director of Study of Environmental Arctic Change. “The amount of time people have to fish, to hunt, to trap is shrinking from both ends.”

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# Water Buffalo In Colorado

By Sarah Tory June 7 High Country News

## One rancher’s plan to establish water buffalo in Colorado.

### The challenges and possibilities of water buffalo ranching in the Roaring Fork Valley.

“If more ranchers knew about water buffalo, they would forget about cows,” José Miranda, a Carbondale rancher, told me one morning in January over breakfast. He listed their advantages: The milk tastes great and it’s healthier, with less cholesterol, 11% more protein, 9% more calcium and 37% more iron than cow’s milk. Water buffalo have environmental benefits, too; they’re able to thrive on more marginal pastures and less resource-intensive foods than dairy cows.

We’d been sitting around his kitchen table with Miranda’s partner, Erin Cuseo, who runs her own small vegetable farm, and his friend and apprentice, Wyatt Dallenbach, getting ready to visit the herd of 18 water buffalo he keeps on a rented plot of land just west of town. Then we climbed into his old green Land Rover, accompanied by his daughter, Paz, and drove through the snow-blanketed streets towards the mountains.

Originally from the swamplands of Southeast Asia, water buffalo have been imported to many parts of world, most famously Italy, where they are coveted for their milk, source of the soft and creamy cheese mozzarella di bufala. Water buffalo herds are now found in the Americas from the high Andes to the dry prairies of central Canada. Still, Miranda has encountered plenty of skeptics. How, they ask,

does an animal from the tropics survive winters — especially a hard winter like the last one — at over 6,000 feet in Colorado’s Roaring Fork Valley?

Miranda, who came from a hot climate himself, merely replies, “It’s harder for them, just like it is for many people and other farm animals.” In any case, he has always been drawn to difficult things.

MIRANDA, WHO HAS AN UNRULY BLACK BEARD, intense green eyes and a missing front tooth, was born and raised in Venezuela’s los llanos, the central flatlands, where his family owned a water buffalo ranch. “Cows were foreign to me,” he said.

Cows didn’t thrive in Venezuela’s native grasslands, so for decades, cattle ranchers planted non-native grasses at great cost. When water buffalo were introduced in 1976 — the year Miranda was born — Venezuela’s ranchers started realizing that they didn’t have to remove native grasses anymore. It’s ironic, he admits, that a foreign animal could help preserve the natural landscape.

At 22, Miranda left to study animal and range science at Montana State University. He never planned on staying in the U.S.; he hoped to take over the family ranch back in Venezuela. But when his father sold it, Miranda decided to go home anyway and start his own herd from scratch. He brought his then-wife (the two are now divorced) and two small children and bought 500 acres and 20 buffalo. Meanwhile, Venezuela was descending into political and economic turmoil under the Hugo Chávez regime. For a few years, Miranda believed that he could avoid it out there on his ranch, but the turmoil found him. One day, in 2013,

a group of armed men arrived at the ranch and robbed his family at gunpoint. They forced Miranda to the floor, tied him up, and filled a pickup with his tools, saddles — even the kids’ bicycles.

A day later, his wife and kids were on a plane to the U.S. Miranda followed soon after, walking away from everything he had built. They moved to Carbondale, where Miranda’s wife was from, and Miranda got a job as a ranch manager at the Tybar Cattle Ranch. Despite having no animals, no land and a young family to support, Miranda was not ready to give up on his dream. In 2014, Colorado delisted the water buffalo as an exotic species, and Miranda decided to begin building a herd. A hobby farmer from Fort Collins named Richard Wheeler spearheaded the delisting, after he pointed out that



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Asian water buffalo and African water buffalo had been incorrectly categorized as the same species. Asian Water Buffalo have been domesticated for longer than cattle, he argued, and by keeping them listed as “exotic,” the state was hindering dairy commerce.

The following year, Miranda bought his first two water buffalo calves from a Texas breeder. The next year, he bought a couple more. But buying his own property was too expensive, so he began leasing plots of land around Carbondale and transformed an old trailer into a portable dairy barn, painted light blue and emblazoned with the words “mobile milking trailer.” It’s a DIY model he hopes other aspiring farmers might follow — one that might make it easier for a place like the Roaring Fork Valley, with its emphasis on local food, to actually support the farmers and ranchers who produce it.

AT THE PASTURE, two water buffalo calves were suckling a pregnant heifer named Missouri that Miranda bought from the Texas breeder. The breeder artificially inseminated her with sperm he imported from Italy — the only country that meets USDA approval for imported water buffalo semen. With Missouri pregnant, Miranda had trained her to adopt the new calves as her own.

On the other side of the pasture, another animal stuck his nose in the pee stream of a fellow buffalo. “They like to bathe in each other’s pee,” 13-year-old Paz said, by way of explanation.

Miranda — who treats the buffalo more like beloved pets than livestock — had a different explanation. “They all have distinct personalities,” he said. With the lack of an established water buffalo industry in the U.S., finding reliable animals has remained a challenge. So is capital: Miranda needed money to keep growing his herd. He tried to apply for a zero interest loan from 2 Forks Club, a local nonprofit that supports local farmers and food entrepreneurs, but wasn’t accepted. “In Venezuela, we say (you need to be) encamurado,” Miranda told me. “I came here as a foreigner, so I’m not part of the club,” he explained, meaning the local ranching community whose roots in the valley go back generations. He ended up getting a regular loan from the bank.

Access to land is another challenge. Across the West — and especially in the Roaring Fork Valley — rising



*José Miranda pulls the unwilling Caroni, a frequent escapee and the most persnickety of his herd, back into the pasture.  
Luna Anna Archey/High Country News*

property values mean the cost of a mortgage far surpasses what a farmer or rancher can produce from agriculture. At one point, Miranda looked into buying a house on 40 acres — just enough to use as a winter base camp for the buffalo — but the cheapest he could find was \$700,000. Farther up the valley, closer to Carbondale, it was at least \$1.5 million.

In the past few decades, many of the older ranchers and farmers have sold their property to developers or to land trusts as conservation easements. The easements protect the farmland from becoming subdivisions, but don’t ensure that it stays in production. Miranda would like to see a program in which more

*(Continued on next page.)*

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county-owned land is made available to farmers at low cost so they can provide some of the food they grow to food banks and low-income communities.

In the meantime, Miranda has been innovating his way around the challenges he faces. By renting land and building his mobile dairy, he can keep his costs low, buying time to grow his herd and make connections with future buyers. Chefs and foodies consider buffalo mozzarella a premium product, worth much more than regular mozzarella. One restaurateur from nearby Aspen invited Miranda to taste the mozzarella he made from buffalo milk imported all the way from Italy. The cheese regularly sells for \$30 a pound in the U.S. and Miranda realized that his only competitors were the Italians; he could offer the same product locally and more cheaply.

Still, even Wheeler, the man who got water buffalo off Colorado's exotic species list, remains skeptical of the animal's ranching's potential. "It's a niche market," he told me. "Maybe some local cheese stores would be interested, but it's mostly a novelty." Miranda has learned to ignore the skepticism. After all, he does not give up easily.

ON A RECENT BLUSTERY DAY IN MAY, I went with Miranda and his partner, Cuseo, to visit the herd at their summer pasture, east of Carbondale in Old Snowmass, in a green valley at the base of the Elk Mountains. It was a season of changes. Two weeks before, Cuseo had given


birth to a baby boy — their first child together — while in February, a female named Orinoco gave birth to Miranda's first calf, Caicara—both named after places in Venezuela.

Meanwhile, in Miranda's home country, a violent attempted coup against the regime of Nicolás Maduro was underway. Miranda's parents and 94-year-old grandmother still live there, despite his pleas for them to leave. Miranda no longer contemplates returning permanently to Venezuela. Most of his fellow ranchers have moved their herds to neighboring Colombia anyway, while here in the mountains of Colorado, Miranda is finally rebuilding what he lost when he left his native country. With another of his heifers pregnant and nine calves expected for next year, Miranda is confident that in a few years, he'll have enough milk-producing buffalo to begin making cheese commercially. Right now though, Miranda is just looking forward to a simple joy: summer naps with his buffalo. "Oh, mi preciosa," he coos, gently nudging one of the buffalo to lie down with him in the scratchy grass. Miranda rubs her belly, savoring the animal's slightly sour smell and recalling how, until he arrived in Colorado, he didn't realize that what he thought was the smell of his homeland had been the smell of the water buffalos all along.


*Sarah Tory is a correspondent for High Country News. She writes from Carbondale, Colorado.*


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*Top left: River at petting farm.  
Top right: Rescue Dog/Getty Images  
Left: Buddy relaxing.  
Bottom right: Chip w/mouse from Joan Usher.  
Next Page top: Wild Scottish Kittens.  
Right: Cat Faces  
Left: From Andrea Equine.  
Bottom Right: Denise's handsome boys.*



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By George Brauneis

(Pictured here with Lil'Shadow)

*I come from the lost  
and unwanted*

*runaways  
& throwaways*

*But I was vital in  
settling this nation*

*I am the one with:  
Bone strong as steel  
Hoof thick as rock  
Hide tough as armor*

*I have been called  
worthless  
But I am priceless*


*I have no pedigree,  
no papers  
But need none to prove  
my loyalty*

*I am America's past  
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# Swimming & Water Safety

*From Jim Plane – State Farm Insurance*

Swimming is a great activity. Not only are there lots of physical benefits, it's also something the whole family can enjoy. But like a lot of things in life, it also comes with risk. Drowning — according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention — is the second leading cause of unintentional injury death for children ages 1-14 years, and the fifth leading cause for people of all ages. So water safety should be a concern no matter where you swim.

## General water safety

Enroll children in swimming lessons at an early age. Risk of drowning is decreased by as much as 88% when children aged 1-4 years take swimming lessons. Adults can also benefit from refresher courses. Many cities have swimming lessons available through local parks and recreation programs as well as gyms with pools. Check with the Red Cross on registering for a swim class in your area.

Learn Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR). It can mean the difference between life and death. Check with the Red Cross about registering for a CPR class in your area. The University of Washington School of Medicine has great information and videos on learning CPR.

Use only U.S. Coast Guard approved life jackets. Young and inexperienced swimmers may want to use a life jacket.

Children should always be supervised. Whether you're in the backyard, a public pool, or at the beach, make sure there is a responsible, designated person to watch the water when children are swimming.

Swim with a buddy. It's a best practice for swimmers of all ages, including adults. Avoid alcohol. It impairs your judgment, balance, coordination, and your body's ability to stay warm. Avoid it when swimming and supervising children.

Enter the water feet-first. Serious injuries — including paralysis — can occur from diving head first into unknown water and hitting the bottom. Enter headfirst only when the area is clearly marked for diving and has no obstructions.

Test the water temperature before you get in. Jumping into cold water can shock your body and elevate your heart rate and blood pressure, and also slow your muscles, making it difficult to swim. Have a phone handy. No matter where you are swimming, the ability to call 911 in an emergency could be a lifesaver.

## Swimming pools

Secure with appropriate barriers. It is best to install a four-foot or taller fence around backyard pools and use self-closing and self-latching gates that open away from the pool. Consider safety alarms. If your house opens directly into the pool area, you may want to install a door alarm or self-closing door. Using a surface wave or underwater alarm will also give you added protection from accidental falls into the pool.

If a child is missing, always check the pool first. If a child has fallen into the pool, every second counts in preventing an accidental drowning. Empty portable pools when not in use. Children can drown in as little as one inch of water. Make sure all portable inflatable and baby pools are drained and put away immediately after use. Remove toys from the pool when it is not in use. They can attract young children into the pool. It's best to keep them stored out of sight. Keep a safety kit handy. A first aid kit that includes a pair of scissors to cut hair, clothing, or a pool cover should be kept within reach in case of an emergency. Lifesaving equipment such as life rings and reaching poles are also recommended. Stay away from pool drains. Limbs, hair, or clothing can become entangled if a drain is faulty. Follow posted safety rules. These usually include no running, pushing or dunking.

Know your limits. Swimming in open water is much different than in a pool. Cold water, currents, and other dangerous conditions can challenge even the strongest swimmers. If you are unsure about your limits, you may want to start out slowly and not venture too far from shore. Educating children from a very young age, and keeping yourself informed, can lead to a lifetime of healthy, safe swimmers.



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# Colorado River Needs A Long-Term Plan

Brad Udall, Douglas Kenney & John Fleck-July 11-HCN

*This article was originally published by The Conversation and is republished here with permission.*

As Midwest states struggled with record spring flooding this year, the Southwest was wrestling with the opposite problem: not enough water. On May 20, federal officials and leaders from seven states signed the Colorado River Drought Contingency Plan, a sweeping new water management agreement for this arid region. The plan is historic: It acknowledges that southwestern states need to make deep water use reductions – including a large share from agriculture, which uses over 70% of the supply – to prevent Colorado River reservoirs from declining to critically low levels.

But it also has serious shortcomings. It runs for less than a decade, through 2026. And its name – “Drought Contingency Plan” – suggests a response to a temporary problem. As scholars who have spent years researching water issues in the West, we know the Colorado River’s problems are anything but temporary. Its waters have already been over-allocated, based on a century of false optimism about available supply. In other words, states have been allowed to take out more than nature puts back in.

Now the river is being further depleted by climate change-driven aridification. The next steps, post-2026, require a recognition that Arizona, Nevada and California

will likely have to come to terms with permanent reductions in their Colorado River supply. For their part, Wyoming, Utah, Colorado and New Mexico must abandon dreams of taking ever-larger gulps from the Colorado River to support future growth.

## Draining western reservoirs

The Drought Contingency Plan is an important step in that direction. By creating a new layer of rules that temporarily reduces water allocations, it significantly reduces the chance of emptying Lake Mead, the massive reservoir on the Arizona-Nevada border that supports residents of Arizona, Nevada, California and Mexico. Without the plan, the lake conceivably could have been sucked dry – a devastating prospect for 40 million people who live in the Colorado River Basin. As a seven-year stopgap, the plan comes just in time. After 19 years of unprecedented low flows, the nation’s two largest reservoirs – Lakes Mead and Powell – collectively contain only 40% as much water as they held in 2000. And while the winter of 2018-2019 was a big snow year, it merely balances the previous year, when record-setting warm and dry weather in large parts of the basin lowered water levels in Lake Powell by over 40 feet.

Dry years like 2018 are the far more likely future. From 2000 through 2004, annual runoff totaled only 65% of the 20th-century average. And in 2012-2013, it was just 60% of the 20th century average. More episodes like these would seriously compromise the system’s ability to provide water to the seven Colorado River Basin states and Mexico.

## A hotter, drier future

Climate change is and will remain a significant issue. Since 2000, Colorado river flows have been 16% below the 20th-century average. Temperatures across the Colorado River Basin are now over 2 degrees F warmer than the 20th-century average, and are certain to continue rising.

Scientists have begun using the term “aridification” to describe the hotter, drier climate in the basin, rather than “drought,” which implies a temporary condition. Studies show that higher 21st-century temperatures have been reducing runoff. Warmer temperatures increase evaporation

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from soils and water bodies, and increase sublimation from snowpacks – direct conversion of snow and ice into fog or steam, without melting first. And they increase plant water use, due to a longer growing season and more warmth on any given day.

In a 2017 study, one of us (Brad Udall) and Jonathan Overpeck found that higher temperatures due to climate change had reduced the flow of the Colorado River by approximately 6%. The study projected that additional warming could reduce flows by approximately 20% in 2050 and up to 35% by 2100 if precipitation levels did not change. A 2018 modeling study estimated the flow losses due to higher temperatures at about 10%.

Overuse in the Lower Basin states of Arizona, Nevada and California is the second major problem. This problem is officially known as the “Structural Deficit” – a 1.2 million acre-foot gap, representing 8% of the river’s flow, between allocations made in the early 20th century and the amount of water the river can provide. Cities from Las Vegas on the north to Tucson and Phoenix on the south and west to San Diego and Los Angeles all have come to depend on that water. Meanwhile, agriculture – including important areas like Yuma and the Imperial Valley, where much of the nation’s valuable winter produce is grown – uses 70% of the river’s water.

The All American Canal diverts water from the Lower Colorado River to irrigate crops in California’s Imperial Valley and supply nine cities.

**Looking past 2026**

With the contingency plan only running until 2026, Basin leaders are already discussing the framework of a new planning effort. In our view, the process should be open and inclusive, given the huge number of competing interests in the region, including municipalities, agriculture, tribes and the environment.

An effective long-term plan should solve the overuse problem in the Lower Basin, while preparing for extended and unprecedented low flows. It should revisit a number of long-standing assumptions about how the river is managed, including the Upper Basin’s so-called “delivery obligation” to the Lower Basin, which leaves the upper states – Wyoming, Utah, Colorado and New Mexico - bearing the burden of climate change, while the Lower Basin states remain free to overuse. And it will have to address the reality that there is not enough water for users in the Upper Basin to continue exporting ever more



*The white “bathtub ring” around Arizona’s Lake Mead, which indicates falling water levels, is currently about 140 feet high* Wayne Hsieh/CC via Flickr

water to growing cities like St. George, Utah, and Colorado’s Front Range.

Solving the twin problems of climate change and overuse will not be easy. The good news is that water users in the basin have found ways to work together for everyone’s benefit, first in a set of water management guidelines negotiated in 2007, and then with the Drought Contingency Plan. Now, after staving off worry that system reservoirs could drop to calamitous levels, water users and managers can focus on these pressing longer-term issues. It is time to step back, look at the big picture and design a water management system that works for all stakeholders in the basin for the next several decades.

*Brad Udall is a senior research scientist at the Colorado Water Institute, Colorado State University; Douglas Kenney is a senior research associate and the director of Western Water Policy Program, University of Colorado, and John Fleck is a professor of practice in water policy and governance and the director of the Water Resources Program, University of New Mexico.*



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# Tips For Decompressing Your New Rescue Dog

By Vicki Clinebell – [dogtime.com](http://dogtime.com)

The time following any shelter adoption can be critical. That's not simply because you and your dog are getting to know each other, but because those first days and weeks are laying a foundation for your new life together.

Imagine living for days, weeks, even months in a shelter where your home is a kennel surrounded by rows of other kennels and lots of unfamiliar barking dogs. There might be sadness and confusion if the dog was given up by its previous family. Maybe it was living as a stray, struggling to survive on the streets. The animal may have lived with an abusive or neglectful owner.

Then one day, everything changes. Someone new comes to the shelter and takes him or her home. All the surroundings, the people, and perhaps other pets inside the new home are new and confusing. The routine is completely different.

Even if a dog comes from a great shelter and is entering a loving home, there's a lot of stress associated with so much change. As the new pet parent, you should be prepared to help make the transition as comfortable and soothing as possible. It's going to take both time and some patience.

Dogs need a period of time to decompress and get back to a calm state of mind, and the amount of time that requires can vary with each dog. At a minimum, expect it to take at least a full week. During that time treat the dog with respect while giving gentle guidance, exercise – walking and playing – and bonding through quiet times together.

## Plan Ahead

Ready your home for this new family member by having the essential supplies needed for their first week. Designated cozy spots where the dog is allowed to rest and relax are important, and soft, comfy bedding is necessary and especially welcome for a senior dog. The dog should have some safe spaces in the home that he can retreat to. If you reward him when he goes to those areas, it will help him settle in and feel more comfortable in a strange environment.

## Set Aside A Place For Food And Water

The shelter can tell you what type of food the dog has been eating and alert you to any allergies. If you decide to change the food, do so gradually so you don't upset the digestive system. Stock up on appropriate treats for training and rewards.

## Supplies

Purchase tags for the collar and decide if you want to use a microchip. Get a sturdy leash and a properly fitting harness.

## Location, Location, Location

Think about where the dog will live once he comes home. Will he be allowed in all of the rooms or limited to some designated areas? Making these decisions before the big homecoming day will reduce anxiety and help you decide where to place beds, gates and barriers. You'll probably want to keep your new dog in a crate when you're not at home, at least until the decompression period is over and everyone is adjusted and comfortable. This is really for the dog's own safety and to avoid any disasters that could happen if the dog panics when you leave. Once the animal understands that you will always come back, you can decide if the pet can stay free while home alone. Separation

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anxiety is very real, so practice brief absences during the initial decompression and keep good-byes and greetings low key to help the dog adjust.

Set up the crate ahead of time. Make sure it's the appropriate size and has comfortable bedding. A Kong or similar smart puzzle game in the crate provides both comfort and some stimulation, and will help the dog pass the time while you are away.

#### **Be Patient**

Even if the dog is housetrained, expect some accidents. The stress of change to a new environment and the associated anxiety can lead to training lapses. Set the dog up for success by taking him or her outside frequently and rewarding with lavish praise and a treat each time they eliminate outside. If you catch the dog in the act, don't punish. Pick him up and take him outside to finish and praise and reward then. If you don't catch the dog in the act, never punish him after the fact. The dog simply won't remember the accident and will not understand why he is being punished. If the dog does something you like and want him to continue doing in the future, lavish praise and a treat will communicate that he should do this again.

#### **Comforting Your New Rescue**

Recognize when your new rescue dog is afraid. Fear is a powerful emotion that throws training and commands out of the window. Comforting the dog when he is afraid does not reinforce the fear as some believe. Speak in a soft voice, and stroke him gently until he calms down. You're probably eager to show off your new canine companion to extended family and friends, but give it some time. During the decompression period allow the dog some time to relax and adjust before rushing them into social situations and expecting them to interact with strangers.

#### **Meet The Family**

If you have other pets, make those introductions slowly. Initially it's best to let dogs get acquainted away from home, on a walk or in the park. The established dogs may feel more territorial in the home. If the animals seem to get along, let them continue their meet-and-greet in the back yard, supervised by you. When you feel comfortable – and only then – let them be together in the house. If you have any hesitation, keep them separated indoors and repeat the outdoor meetings until they all fully adjust.

Every dog will make the transition to a new home at his or her own speed. It can take a shelter dog 6-8 weeks or even more to fully adjust to a new home. Don't worry if the behavior doesn't fall into place right away. With love and patience, it will happen.

**Editor's Note:** All of the above is true for cats also. They need homes and for mountain living they live longer with less injuries if they stay inside. A catio (enclosed small porch) with access via a small doggy door can allow the litter to be outside while protecting the cat from wildlife. Felines are usually more shy and need your patience in adjusting to new things and other pets and people.

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# Federal Employee Does The Unexpected

By Tony Davis May 30 High Country News

Steve Spangle, a career employee of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, seemed the unlikeliest whistleblower: During his 15 years supervising Arizona’s ecological services office, which is responsible for protecting the region’s endangered wildlife, migratory birds and habitats, Spangle opposed environmentalists on a host of issues. For example, in 2016 he signed off on a key biological clearance for the Rosemont Mine, a giant, open pit copper project that will disturb more than 5,000 acres of lush Madrean woodlands of oak and mesquite trees near Tucson. But this spring, Spangle, now 65 and retired, spoke out publicly against Fish and Wildlife’s 2017 decision about a long-contested housing development along the San Pedro River — a decision he signed off on.

For more than a decade, developers and agencies have battled over building the 28,000-home Villages at Vigneto subdivision. Pumping for Vigneto could choke off the aquifer that nourishes miles of lush ciénega and classic cottonwood-willow forests along the San Pedro River, an important destination for migratory birds such as green kingfishers, gray hawks and ladder-backed woodpeckers. The development would also clear more than 12,000 acres

of desert. In 2016, Spangle required the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to do a full environmental review of the project. But in 2017, Spangle dropped that requirement. That, in turn, meant the Army Corps could re-issue its federal permit for the development, clearing the way for the developer to start building. The Corps has since suspended its permit, which authorized filling in desert washes, after multiple groups — including the Lower San Pedro Watershed Alliance, Sierra Club and Center for Biological Diversity — sued to overturn it. But Spangle’s policy reversal stands, which means that the developer still won’t have to study environmental impacts on the vast majority of the land.

In late March, Spangle told the Arizona Daily Star that he changed the project’s requirements under pressure from superiors at the Dept of the Interior, then led by Ryan Zinke, and that this case led him to retire early. The department denies pressuring Spangle to change his decision. Spangle recently spoke with High Country News about his surprising decision to speak out.

*This interview has been edited for length and clarity.*

**High Country News:** When you reversed your decision on the Vigneto development in 2017, was it hard for you to write a decision that you didn’t believe in?

**Steve Spangle:** I knew that this was the (Trump) administration’s position, and, since I worked for the administration, I had a job to do. I was also pretty certain that the correct interpretation would float to the top during any litigation, so I didn’t lose any sleep over the decision.

**HCN:** Why did you blow the whistle?  
**SS:** It was the political aspect — that I strongly suspected had happened and has now been confirmed — that somebody had done an end run around my office and sought influence above me to change my position. That was different than anything that had happened to me before. I felt the public should know that some shenanigans had taken place. It didn’t seem like the right way to do business.

**HCN:** Who requested the reversal of your original decision? How did you learn of the request?



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**SS:** A friend in the Interior Solicitor’s Office called me to say that she was told by an Interior Dept political appointee that it would be in my best interest politically to reverse my decision. The way she phrased it, it was clear that she wanted to keep that person anonymous. So I didn’t even ask (who it was). I’m also not going to disclose who called me, because she’s a friend. *(Eds. note: Both the Arizona Republic and the Arizona Daily Star have reported that Mike Ingram, the CEO of development company El Dorado Holdings Inc., called then-Deputy Interior Secretary David Bernhardt in 2017 to argue against Spangle’s earlier decision.)*

**HCN:** What makes this case different from other permits, such as for the Rosemont Copper mine, over which you and the environmental movement went toe to toe?

**SS:** What really, at its core, bothered me the most this time was that decisions were being made with political influence. I’m not saying there weren’t political decisions being made before, but they never affected me. I was never told to make a decision different than what I thought was the right decision until now. Our job (at Fish and Wildlife) is to assist federal agencies in implementing their programs, while at the same time minimizing the effects on listed species. That often requires a detailed consultation about those impacts under the Endangered Species Act. In

this case, Interior and the Corps were trying to avoid that review.



*Green kingfishers rely on the San Pedro River’s habitat, which new development could threaten.*  
Rhett Herring

**HCN:** The developer and the Army Corps say that a detailed analysis of indirect environmental impacts to the San Pedro River isn’t needed. What’s wrong with that rationale?

**SS:** I don’t think that is the correct position. It’s the only north-south migratory corridor of any significance between the Rio Grande and the Colorado River.

**HCN:** What does Interior’s handling of this case say about the Trump Administration’s view of environmental issues?

**SS:** What happened to me is a symptom of a much bigger problem with the administration’s environmental policy. Trump’s appointments to run natural resource agencies such as Interior and EPA have really been examples of putting the fox in charge of the henhouse. It shows that the pro-industry side is dominant right now in Washington, D.C.

**HCN:** What do you hope will come from your decision to speak out?

**SS:** I hope that the 2017 decision will be reversed and that my original decision will be restored.

*Tony Davis has written for High Country News on water, grazing, land use, mining and other topics since the late 1980s. He’s currently the Arizona Daily Star’s environmental reporter.*

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# Update: BuffaloFieldCampaign.org

July 11, 2019 Sterilization Study on Wild Bison – Records Show a Breakdown in Accountability. Investigation requested into potentially unlawful destruction of public records and removal of scientific data in a government funded study. Documents indicate federal agency employees deleted and discussed deleting emails and may have removed data in a population control study on bison from Yellowstone National Park.

To access public records referenced in this press release, go to:  
<https://www.buffalofieldcampaign.org/bison-gonacon-study>

## West Yellowstone (MT) – Buffalo Field Campaign has requested the heads of two federal agencies open investigations into the potentially unlawful destruction of public records and removal of scientific data.

The letters released today were sent to Yellowstone National Park Superintendent Cameron (Cam) Sholly, and U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Administrator Kevin Shea. “Decades ago, Congress passed the Freedom of Information Act and the Federal Records Act to ensure public access to government records. This access is absolutely critical to the functioning of our democracy, for it allows public interest groups like Buffalo Field Campaign to keep a close, careful watch on those who govern,” said attorney Daniel Snyder, Law Offices of Charles M. Tebbutt, P.C. “There is no better panacea for corruption than a paper trail, which is why Federal agencies and employees have a duty to keep and retain public records.”

Records of federal agency employees discussing deleting emails and removing scientific data were divulged in a Freedom of Information Act lawsuit filed by Buffalo Field Campaign against the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. The lawsuit is ongoing and

stems from a public records request the group made in October 2017. Buffalo Field Campaign is represented by the Law Offices of Charles M. Tebbutt, P.C.

In one record, Yellowstone National Park employee Rick Wallen wrote: “I have deleted the many emails with the whole group of folks in this conversation . . .” Records also show U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service employees discussing withholding data from a study to evaluate sterilization by use of GonaCon on wild bison taken from Yellowstone National Park. “No results are better than bad results!” wrote Jack C. Rhyan.

The sterilization study was the result of a “Starbucks brainstorm session” to push the idea of “decreasing prevalence” of brucellosis in bison. In addition to discussing withholding scientific data and deleting emails, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service employees made disrespectful comments about bison under their care.

Patrick R. Clarke: “Which brings up another question.... some females were bred by SD bulls.....what do we do with their negative offspring? (i.e. the impure Yellowstone bastards!).”

Jack C. Rhyan: “I think with those we donate their little bastard carcasses to the food bank, as they have no special value for conservation.” “PS: we might should delete these emails.”

“Contrary to the disrespect and ignorance shown by these employees, bison hold special value for restoring grasslands and regenerating a diversity of life on the prairies,” commented Justine Sanchez, President of Buffalo Field Campaign. “Bison have a spiritual nature that deserves our honor and respect.”

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Deputy Administrator Jack A. Shere ordered the study of GonaCon on bison be shut down and the bison slaughtered in 2017.



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There's order came on the heels of an inspection of the Corwin Springs, Montana study facility that found employees had not reported their study to the Secretary of Agriculture. According to notes taken by a Montana Dept. of Livestock employee, "no one was aware that this research was occurring." The WILDIT team behind the GonaCon study was disbanded.

The slaughter was carried out despite a provision in Yellowstone National Park's permit which states: "Disease free bison should not be killed as a convenient method to move the animals out of USDA facilities." The slaughter of bison in the GonaCon study was held up because all of the Montana slaughter plants were full with bison being captured for slaughter by Yellowstone National Park.

Yellowstone National Park permitted up to 171 bison to be taken from the wild for the study. Reports indicate 99 bison were taken from Yellowstone National Park and 3 bison from the Montana Dept. of Livestock. Bison were also bred as part of the study.

Bison given GonaCon are not fit for human consumption and were incinerated or landfilled. Several bison died from calf abandonment and goring, a sign of stress from confinement and breakdown in herd social structure, a result of slaughtering older family members. Records also disclose bison died from being "hung in gate" and "hung in rope" and suffered other injuries resulting from confinement and handling. A handful of bulls remaining from the study are quarantined at a caged facility near Gardiner, Montana.

The records do not disclose what became of some bison that were transferred to Fort Collins as part of the GonaCon study and other research carried out in collaboration with Colorado State University.

"The government's sterilization study on wild bison should never have been funded by the U.S. Congress, permitted by Yellowstone National Park, or carried out by a federal agency beholden to the livestock industry," said Darrell Geist, habitat coordinator for Buffalo Field Campaign. "A lot of wild bison suffered and died because of a breakdown in government accountability."

**Freedom of Information Act record excerpts**

Rick Wallen, Yellowstone National Park: "Jack, I have deleted the many emails with the whole group of folks in this conversation so please pass along to Pauline and Matt."

Rebecca K. Frey, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service: "Sorry, I have just been working with the database a lot lately.....anyway, we started the GC project using Rivanol as one of the regular tests, however, the reagents have been off..(a known lab issue)... and we have been getting some bizarre results from Rivanol....

what do we plan to do with the Rivanol test results, and if we don't have a complete set of tests over the years as with FP and CF and others....do we want to keep that data at hand or ignore it? I plan to "hide" that column for now....but I may delete in future.....we still have all of the paper results filed away in my most secret GC stash." Jack C. Rhyan, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service: "I'd say keep it in your stash but let's delete it.



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# Exploit The Sharp Edge Of Your Life's Sword

By Frosty Wooldridge

Back in high school, you attended classes without much appreciation of your reasons for education. You complied with educational protocol for all teenagers. For the most part, you carried your books to school, read your assignments, cheered at athletic games, joined a few clubs, and finally, graduated from your course work in a blinding flash.

*(Three friends on a coast-to-coast bicycle adventure across America.*

*Standing in front of Multnomah Falls in the Columbia River Gorge.)  
Photography by Frosty Wooldridge*

After hearing some teacher rain praises down upon you, moments later, you walked across the stage for your diploma.

Now what?

Ironically, most American schools today fail to teach courses in healthy relationships, how to gain successful marriages and child rearing, how to find work and how to navigate the competitive edges of living. Worse, no one has discovered a method for curing the "smart phone addiction epidemic."

For 20 percent of 18 year old's, college creates a "raison d'etra" or "reason for living" to pursue higher learning that may or may not allow a student a better job and greater chances of success. If you enjoy such a path, college opens




you up to critical thinking, greater understanding and a more compelling path toward life. It broadens you, expands your intellect and offers you more breadth.

Philosophy, sociology, physics, biology, calculus, literature and history offer your thriving mind new ideas to ponder. Shakespeare may inspire. Hawkins may confound. Camus may stimulate. Muir carries you into the wilderness-adventure realm. Emerson, well, he thrives in your heart of hearts.

If you can make the college grade, it may be your launching pad for a fulfilling life. For anyone not able to spring off that intellectual diving board with a college career, other options open to you in various areas. If you follow most high school graduates, you pretty much apply for jobs and stumble into something. That "something job" rarely fulfills you or resembles you.

My second son screwed around in high school. He barely graduated. I tried to talk with him in his junior year, "Jack, you're screwing around with poor grades, but you race toward 18 when life no longer offers free house, free



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food, free clothes, free shower, free tooth brush, free TV, free computer, free transport, free medical, free insurance and mother cooks dinner.”

He didn't listen. He graduated, but couldn't get into college. He squeaked into junior college, but promptly flunked out. He grabbed a roofing job that nearly busted him in half. Later, he took a job at a 24-Hour Fitness center at \$8.00 an hour on the night shift where he languished for five years. He remained broke, bored and living day to day with no aspirations. No vacations and no girlfriends look for a guy making such pathetic wages.

Mind you, Jack is very intelligent, but life doesn't care how smart you are if you're lazy and unmotivated. Some girlfriend advised him about a pharmacy tech job at \$11.00 an hour. He took it, hates his boss and plows through 40 to 50 hours a week filling prescriptions to medicated and addicted patients and other suffering humans. He graduated to a decent wage, but must deal with not pursuing his life on his terms and a miserable two week's vacation annually. He's trapped and he's set himself up for a very average life.

So many American twenty-something's possess so much talent and possibilities, but they squander their young lives in confusion.

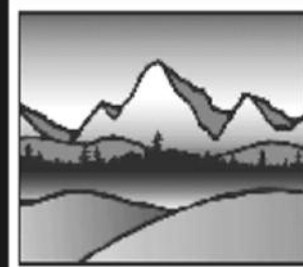
You must understand this fact: you either charge into life with a sharp blade or life will stab you in the guts with a dull blade day in and day out.

You either take charge by your decisions, your clarity and your choices—or life cuts you down slowly, day by day, cut by cut until you emotionally bleed into a lump of a human being. That's why so many suffer a mid-life crisis.

Solution: search for and discover your highest and best through education. Try your best through your actions. Elevate your imagination to explore your possibilities. Hang with successful friends. Think, act and pursue your highest vibrational energies. When you do, the “universe” conspires with you. People support you. Life sharpens your blade for you.

Ultimately, you charge into life with clarity and purpose enough to conquer and command your destiny.

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# Back To Kansas

My love for ballet continued on through the years we lived in Florida. I had to turn ten years old for my ballet teacher to allow me to going 'en pointe. She said my bones had developed enough even though I was short so that no damage would be done to my skeletal composition with putting so much strain on the body by dancing on the tips of my toes. There were a couple of other young dancers that had just reached the skill level to advance to pointe classes, so our teacher took us on a trip down to Palm Beach to get our toe shoes made from this little old European man that had a small shop in the upscale part of Palm Beach that was similar to Rodeo Drive in Hollywood.

We had been to Palm Beach on occasion over the years to watch 'The Ballet' at the Royal Poinciana Playhouse. Many ballet masters performed there from Europe, Canada and even Russia as guest artists with the corps de ballet troupe in residence and their solo artists. But this trip to get our first pointe shoes made by hand was very special. You could order toe shoes from Capezio, but my ballet teacher Chela Jacobo thought your first pair should be made to fit just you - by hand and a master pointe shoe maker. We had an appointment to get fitted: standing on thick tissue paper

while a technician drew around our bare feet with a pencil. Then we bought some lambs wool at the store and left to go eat a special lunch in the upscale part of Palm Beach.

Our pink satin pointe shoes arrived in the mail a couple of weeks later and I started pointe classes along with my other classes: ballet, jazz and Spanish Dancing. Chela taught us how to sew elastic onto the sides of the shoes along with the ribbons and also schooled us on how to take care of our feet to avoid deformities often caused by bad pointe dance practices. (Pictured here: a pair of my well used Capezio toe shoes.) I loved dancing so much I ignored the discomfort of the toe shoes and began to get better at the more advanced movements of classical Russian ballet. I always wondered why the terms for the dance were in French and the style I was taught originated with the Russian Ballet.



"I don't remember when my parents began their war against one another, but I do know the only prisoners they took were their children." (1) The summer after fifth grade my mother packed her little Ford Falcon with us three kids and as much stuff as she could shove into the tiny trunk and we moved back to Kansas.

My Aunt and Uncle lived in Wichita with their families so we rented a tiny two-bedroom apartment down the street from where they lived in nice houses. I started sixth grade

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not knowing a soul, again. And found out there were no ballet teachers in Wichita.

Every summer I got shipped off to one or both grandparents houses that lived on separate sides of the state, but both farms had at least one horse. My mother's horse I already knew well from having her on the farm before we left for Florida. My other grandmother leased some of her land for cattle grazing so there was a cutting horse at her farm. I never lacked for a horse to ride even when the summer visits were over and school started up in the fall as we had bought a house across the street from a riding stable when my dad moved back home for a couple of years.

The rich ladies that boarded their horses at the stable often needed a warm-up rider to get the bucks and kicks out of their spirited horses before they mounted up. So I got to ride some fabulous horses in addition to mucking out stalls and throwing flakes of hay. Some nights me and my brother would sneak out and go catch a couple of horses that got turned out and rode around the pastures with makeshift bridles. It was a lot of fun except for a time or two we caught a horse that bucked or ran off with us.

Finally by the time I finished middle school a ballet teacher had moved to Wichita and I began taking classes again. It all came back to me and I was a performing solo dancer and doing some partnering along with being a

member of the corps de ballet as I graduated High School. I danced with the Wichita Civic Ballet and the Wichita Metropolitan Ballet for several years. We performed the Nutcracker every December and my first solo and partnering debut was when I got the part of the Arabian. They were great experiences and I enjoyed performing. We also danced Swan Lake and Copelia on the big Convention Center Stage downtown. Great memories of good times as compared to my home life because it was not all that rosy due to my parents divorce.

*By A.M. Wilks*

*1. (Pat Conroy's Prince of Tides)*

# HIGHLANDER

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# Power Update

August  
2019

## Your Piece of the \$5.5 Million Pie is Coming Soon!

United Power is retiring \$5.5 million in capital credits in August, and members will soon be getting their "piece of the pie" in United Power's largest retirement ever. Because cooperatives do not earn profits in the sense that other businesses do, any margins remaining after all expenses have been paid are returned to the members in the form of capital credits.

Your share of capital credits is determined by your electric usage and years of service with United Power. The Board of Directors made the decision to retire capital credits after carefully assessing the financial condition of the cooperative to determine if retirements are feasible. Capital credits represent a member's investment into the cooperative, and are used over time to make capital improvements to the electric system.

Anyone who had service 2018 or earlier will receive either a check or a bill credit as part of their capital credit retirement. Checks will be issued to any member who has a capital credit retirement of \$10 or more, while smaller amounts will appear as credits on your August or September bill. An informative insert will be included in the retirement checks and credits that should help to explain how capital credits work.

Additional information about Capital Credits can be found at [www.unitedpower.com](http://www.unitedpower.com) or by calling 303-637-1300. Capital Credits are just one of the many ways cooperative membership pays!



## United Power has a New Website Home

If you've visited our website anytime over the past month, you may have noticed things look a little differently now. United Power has been busy behind the scenes over the past few months building a website with you, our member, in mind.

United Power officially launched the new website at the end of June. Members can find things more easily than ever thanks to the new site's more user-friendly navigation, visually focused layout and more intuitive design.

Visit [www.unitedpower.com](http://www.unitedpower.com) to check it out for yourself.

## Be Scam Smart

Residential and business members on United Power's lines have reported receiving calls demanding payment for "past due" amounts on electric bills. In an effort to protect your money and personal information, United Power warns all members of the potential for this scam.

To keep up with the current status of your electric account, reference your monthly statement, check your account via SmartHub (available FREE to members as a smartphone app) or call United Power's Member Services Department at 303-637-1300.


If you are ever in doubt about a potential scam call, hang up and call United Power at 303-659-0551.



### Know How United Power Conducts Business:

- United Power does not collect utility payments at member homes or businesses.
- United Power never calls members in person to collect overdue electric bills.
- United Power will never require or demand prepaid debits or other prepaid methods as the only form of payment we would accept.

**UNITED  
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# Mountain Fest Sat. Aug. 3rd – 12-5pm

## Skywatchers Aug. 17th – 7pm-9pm

### CCCIA HALL 31258 Coal Creek Canyon



**11753 Hillcrest**  
Amazing Remodel / Amazing Views  
4 BD/ 4 BA 2,620 sq.ft. 2.18 Ac. **\$569,000**



**32147 Sylvan Road**  
Complete Rebuild / Passive Solar  
3 BD/ 2 BA 1,405 sq.ft. 1.01 Acre



**266 Aspen Drive**  
Remodeled Thruout, Engulfed in Aspens  
3 BD/ 2 BA 2,036 sq.ft. .95 Ac. **\$445,000**



**269 Olde Carter Lake Road**  
Snowcapped VIEWS! 1.87 Acres  
3 BD/ 2 BA 2,475 sq.ft. **\$515,000**



**Coal Creek Canyon**  
Gorgeous Updated Log Home - 1.82 Acres  
4 BD/ 4 BA 3,817 sq.ft. **\$1,100,000**



**221 Aspen Drive**  
Nicely Remodeled - VIEWS! .76 Acre  
2 BD/ 1 BA 1,667 sq.ft. **\$384,000**



**33588 Lyttle Dowdle**  
Beautiful Building Lot! Lots of Sunshine  
1.04 Acre **\$59,900**



**2184 Steele Street**  
Fantastic Tri-Level  
3 BD/ 2 BA 1,649 sq.ft. **\$359,000**



**2 Ronnie Road**  
Remodeled Mtn Home - VIEWS  
3 BD/ 2 BA 2,109 sq.ft. .54 Ac. **\$419,000**



**900 Camp Eden Road**  
Amazing Custom Remodel  
3 BD/ 2 BA 2,358 sq.ft.



**10241 Thorodin Drive**  
Beautiful Mtn Contemporary 1.83 Acres  
3 BD/ 2 BA 2,100 sq.ft. **\$475,000**



**76 Wonderland Avenue**  
Adorable & Updated Cabin - Wondervul!  
2 BD/ 2 BA 1,674sq.ft. **\$309,000**



**181 Hummingbird Lane**  
Nicely Updated - Theater Room 1.28 Ac.  
3 BD/ 2 BA 2,129 sq.ft. **\$494,900**



**Coal Creek Canyon**  
Custom Log Home - 4.2 Acres  
3 BD/ 4 BA 3,300 sq.ft. **\$900,000**



**19 Leon Lane**  
Amazing Remodel-Horse Prop -Views  
2 BD/ 2 BA 1,500 sq.ft. **\$399,000**



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