



Buffalo Timeline!

- **1806:** Buffalo numbered 50 million strong. Lewis and Clark lead an 8,000-mile expedition from St. Louis to the Pacific Ocean and back, documenting their discovery of 178 plants and 122 animals. "The moving multitude darkened the whole plains", Lewis and Clark said about the buffalo they encountered.
- **1860:** The first railroads cut through buffalo country, claiming vast tracks of grazing land, and increasing the consumption of buffalo hides and meat.
- **1872:** Yellowstone National Park created. Soon after, poaching of buffalo within the park begins.
- **1883:** Less than three hundred buffalo remained in the U.S.
- **1894:** Congress passes the National Park Protective Act after an inventory of live buffalo in Yellowstone totals only 20.
- **1988:** The first of thousands of free-ranging buffalo are slaughtered after they naturally migrate out of Yellowstone National Park in search of food on public lands where cattle graze.
- **1997:** NWF teams up with the Inter-Tribal Buffalo Cooperative (ITBC) to protect Yellowstone buffalo, labeling as theoretical and unproven the threat that the buffalo might infect cattle with the disease brucellosis.
- **2003:** NWF funds buyout of cattle ranchers' grazing rights in Horse Butte, Montana. Retirement of grazing land on this peninsula means a gain of 2,000 acres of protected rangeland for the largest herd of free-ranging buffalo in America.