

From: **Jim Rogers** <[REDACTED]>  
Date: Tue, Jun 23, 2020 at 8:19 PM  
Subject: Montana Water Rights Protection Act (S.3019)  
To: <[Zachary\\_Spencer@indian.senate.gov](mailto:Zachary_Spencer@indian.senate.gov)>

Dear Zachary,

The Mission Mountain Audubon Society approves the Montana Water Rights Protection Act (S. 3019) including a provision that turns over the management of the National Bison Range to the Confederated Salish and Kootenai tribes. Attached is a letter from 2016 that describes our long time support.

And if you missed it, check out the National Audubon Society article below that describes the tribes' efforts to bring back Trumpeter swans. This inspiring story of environmental restoration by the tribes features Mission Mountain Audubon board members, Dale Becker and Janene Lichtenberg, and serves as a reminder of what we can do given the cooperation of various agencies and organizations as well as the dedication of sufficient resources, personnel, and cutting-edge scientific research.

Plainly put, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes perform great conservation work; therefore, they deserve a water compact and have earned the right to manage the National Bison Range.

Thank you for your consideration, jim

Jim Rogers  
President, Mission Mountain Audubon  
Polson, Montana

*Led by Tribal Scientists, Montana's Trumpeter Swan Revival Is a Triumph | Audubon*

<https://www.audubon.org/magazine/fall-2018/led-tribal-scientists-montanas-trumpeter-swan>  
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Mission Mountain  
Audubon Society

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48901 Hwy. 93, Suite A-179 Polson MT 59860 406-883-3611



24 June, 2016

Dear Bison Range Working Group,

The Mission Mountain Audubon Society supports returning the National Bison Range to the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. This should have been done a long time ago. The Kootenai, Pend d'Oreille, and Salish peoples clearly know how to manage bison and history is on their side; in fact, a tribal member is responsible for saving the original bison calves from the plains that grew into the herd we enjoy today. Always planning for seven generations ahead, the tribes have skillfully demonstrated that their thoughtful and sustainable stewardship of the land and its natural resources has made the Flathead Indian Reservation a great place to live for everyone, tribal and non-tribal people alike.

Indeed, the Bison Range is a popular wildlife watching destination that is frequented by many Mission Mountain Audubon members and we welcome the increased Tribal management of all of its flora and fauna. Significantly, the proposed legislation guarantees that public access will continue which is an important consideration to our membership.

But that's not the only reason. Mission Mountain Audubon applauds the Salish and Kootenai Tribes' reintroduction of the Trumpeter Swan. Just yesterday, for example, I helped with the release of six Trumpeter swans into the Pablo National Wildlife Refuge. Thanks to the Tribes' progressive conservation efforts, the Trumpeter population inhabiting the Flathead Indian Reservation has increased from zero to approximately 150 to 180 birds over the past 20 years. And not only did the Tribes successfully reintroduce the Peregrine Falcon, but they intend to bring back the Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse once they have restored the appropriate habitat.

For thousands of years, the Salish, Pend d'Oreille, and Kootenai peoples have depended on the land for food, shelter, and inspiration. Although each of the tribes are culturally unique, they all share a strong spiritual connection to the environment including a deep respect for bison. A quick look at the map of the Flathead Indian Reservation shows four Conservation Areas dedicated to Bighorn Sheep, Elk, and Grizzly Bear, two Tribal Primitive Areas, and the Mission Mountain Tribal Wilderness that reveals their strong commitment to the conservation of wildlife and natural resources as well as the preservation of their cultures.

Plainly put, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes have earned the right to manage the bison. Furthermore, this an opportunity to correct a historic injustice when land from the Flathead Indian Reservation was taken- without their consent- to create the Bison Range. Now is the time to makes things right. Thank you for your consideration, jim.

James Rogers

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