

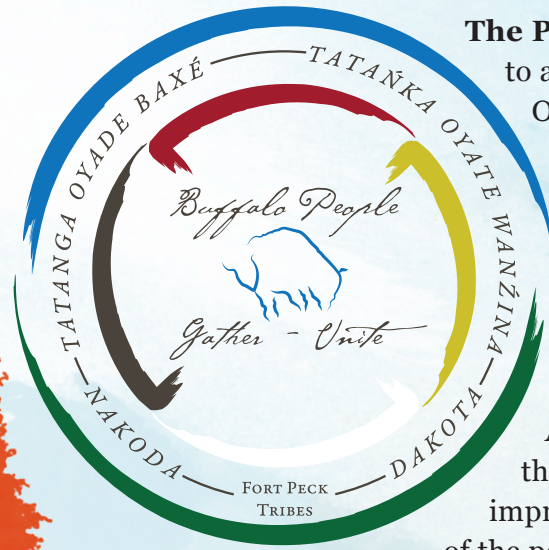
BUFFALO PEOPLE

TATANGA OYADE BAXÉ  TATAŃKA OYATE WANŽINA

GATHER UNITE

The 2015 Fort Peck Buffalo Survey was supported by the Ft. Peck Pté Group and funded by World Wildlife Fund to understand the values, needs, and aspirations of the people of Fort Peck for the return of buffalo.

RETURN OF THE BUFFALO TO FORT PECK



The Pté Group's mission is to advocate for the TataŃka Oyate/Tatanga Oyade or Buffalo People, by developing, enhancing, and perpetuating the people's relationship with the buffalo through education and the sharing of cultural information. A greater connection to the buffalo has the power to improve the health and welfare of the people of the Fort Peck Reservation and their relatives, the Buffalo People. The Pté Group is open to all community members.

The last buffalo hunt at Fort Peck was in approximately 1881, buffalo were then absent for almost 120 years until Fort Peck Tribes established two herds to contribute to a sustainable future for buffalo at Ft. Peck:

BUSINESS HERD:

SOURCE: Ft. Belknap

YEAR RETURNED: 2000

PURPOSE:

Generating revenue from off-reservation sale of:

- ☀ Hunts
- ☀ Live animals
- ☀ Meat

CULTURAL HERD:

SOURCE: Yellowstone NP

YEAR RETURNED: 2012

PURPOSE:

- ☀ Cultural reconnection
- ☀ Feeding the community
- ☀ Buffalo conservation

VALUE TO THE PEOPLE

Each year, the Fort Peck Turtle Mound Buffalo Ranch donates 25 buffalo to tribal programs and cultural activities that include diabetes programs, homeless shelters, Sun Dances, pow-wows, and funerals. The value of these donated animals is annually equivalent to \$36,000 in donated revenue. Financial projections show that providing 25 buffalo per year for cultural uses can be maintained under the business plan prepared by World Wildlife Fund. If the community and the Ft. Peck tribal executive board feel that more buffalo should be made available to tribal members and programs, then the land base and the buffalo herd must be expanded to make this sustainable.

THE GOAL OF SUSTAINABILITY

The Buffalo sustained Plains tribes for countless generations and now there is an opportunity for the people of Ft. Peck to sustain the buffalo for the benefit of the culture, the economy, the wildlife and the land.

ECONOMY

Sale of live buffalo and buffalo meat off-reservation helps fund the program and provide affordable meat for community members.

CULTURE

Traditional hunts, meat, and buffalo body parts for ceremonies, tribal programs and healthy food for community members.

SPIRITUALITY

The buffalo's return is important to our people because we believe that everything in the universe is created by a Great Spirit; stars, earth, water, plants, animals, and humans all hold a piece of the divine that is shared through ceremony and kindness toward all creation.

WILDLIFE

By restoring buffalo grazing to native prairies, the land, the people and the species that have historically relied upon them have an opportunity to benefit and thrive.

THE SURVEY

WHAT THE SURVEY TELLS US?

The people want **Transparency**, greater communication, consultation, and engagement so that they may understand how to better shape management and opportunities for hunting and securing buffalo meat and products for food, community, and ceremonial purposes. They'd like **Meat and buffalo products** to be more readily available for the people's use and want the **lands used by buffalo** to be expanded on the Fort Peck Reservation.

There is also strong support for **an accessible buffalo herd** that is located closer to the people.

WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE SURVEY?

- **369** participants, **285** of whom were enrolled members of Ft. Peck Tribes
- **51%** (124 people) from Poplar, Brockton, and Fort Kipp • **49%** (121 people) from Wolf Point, Frazer, and Oswego
- **63%** of responses came from women.

How do tribal members value buffalo?	
I value buffalo as wildlife:	88% Agree
I value buffalo as relatives:	68% Agree
I value buffalo as livestock:	54% Agree

Communicating about buffalo management with tribal members	
Tribal members should be consulted about goals for tribal buffalo management:	74% Agree
I understand how the Fort Peck Buffalo herds are currently being managed:	44% Agree
Goals for tribal buffalo management are communicated clearly to all members:	32% Agree

Securing buffalo meat and products (tribal members)		
I know how to obtain buffalo meat or products from sources on the reservation:	Yes	23%
I have requested buffalo meat or products from Fort Peck Tribes:	Yes	13%
I have received buffalo meat or products from Fort Peck Tribes:	Yes	15%

Tribal recipients of buffalo meat and products	
Tribal members should be consulted about the process of selecting tribal recipients of buffalo:	64% Agree
I understand how the tribes select tribal recipients of buffalo meat and products:	30% Agree
The process for selecting tribal recipients of buffalo has been communicated clearly to all members:	25% Agree

Fort Peck tribal member perspectives on buffalo hunts	
Buffalo should be hunted:	55% Agree
Tribal members have a fair opportunity to hunt buffalo at Fort Peck:	21% Agree
90% of participants have not hunted a buffalo at Fort Peck:	
53% of participants would not hunt a buffalo given the opportunity	

Tribal support for potential changes to the buffalo herds	
We should help to restore buffalo to the grasslands of North America:	83% Agree
The buffalo herds and the land they graze on the reservation should be expanded:	76% Agree
Fort Peck should establish a herd for viewing that is more accessible:	70% Agree

The people, wildlife, and the buffalo*	
We should encourage our youth to learn about buffalo and other wildlife for future jobs:	91% Agree
We should use buffalo for healthful food:	87% Agree
We should encourage our people to reconnect with buffalo through tribal traditions:	86% Agree
We should help to restore buffalo to the grasslands of North America:	83% Agree
The return of buffalo will be a source of healing for our people:	78% Agree
Overall I am interested in local wildlife issues:	78% Agree

Popularity among tribal members of options for allocation of buffalo meat and products	
Tribal senior programs:	83% Agree 4% Disagree
Resident tribal members who are ill (e.g. diabetics):	78% Agree 5% Disagree
Resident tribal members with limited ability to buy food:	76% Agree 6% Disagree
Resident tribal members with ceremonial needs:	74% Agree 6% Disagree
All tribal members who want buffalo meat or products:	71% Agree 7% Disagree
Fort Peck schools for student meal programs:	69% Agree 10% Disagree
Tribal members who pay for meat or buffalo products:	67% Agree 10% Disagree
Tribal members who pay to hunt:	52% Agree 20% Disagree
Non-tribal members who pay to hunt:	33% Agree 38% Disagree

Tribal member response for payment on buffalo hunts	
Tribal members should have priority over non-members for available Fort Peck hunts:	74% Agree
Tribal members should have to pay to participate in a Fort Peck buffalo hunt:	38% Agree 34% Disagree
Non-tribal members should be allowed to hunt Fort Peck Buffalo if they pay a fee.	46% Agree 32% Disagree

Tribal members believe the "cultural herd" should be managed to	
Provide for the ceremonial needs of tribal members:	71% Agree
Provide food for tribal members:	69% Agree
Earn money from tourism:	58% Agree

Cultural Herd: Cultural reconnection, feeding the community, and buffalo conservation

Business Herd: Generating revenue from sale of hunts, live animals, and meat to off-reservation interests.

Do tribal members eat buffalo and how often?	
Only 7% said they would never eat buffalo	
45% would prefer to eat buffalo daily, weekly or monthly	
Only 5% currently eat buffalo daily, weekly, or monthly	

Tribal members would like to make use of the following buffalo parts	
Hides with hair: 130 people	Tripe: 94 people
Leather: 117 people	Bones: 60 people
Skull: 103 people	Wool: 55 people
Horns: 96 people	Other: 30 people

What would tribal members be willing to pay for buffalo meat?		
	Support	Examples of est. cost/pound to individual(s)
Current market prices:	11%	\$9/pound
Cost:	20%	\$2/pound
Prices subsidized by tribes:	37%	\$1/pound
Free:	32%	\$0

Fort Peck tribes pay approx. \$2/pound for transport, slaughter, processing, and packaging at a Scobey facility so at approx. \$2/pound the tribes break even.

Tribal members believe the "business herd" should be managed to make money by	
Selling live buffalo or meat to off-reservation buyers for the highest possible price:	50% Agree
Selling hunts to non-members:	35% Agree
Buffalo should not be managed to make money for the tribes:	26% Agree

Full survey results are available at:
www.fortpeckbuffalo.com