



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Grand Canyon National Park

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## Grand Canyon News Release

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### **National Park Service Seeks Public Comment on an Initial Bison Herd Reduction Environmental Assessment for Grand Canyon National Park**

**Grand Canyon, Ariz.** – The National Park Service (NPS) has announced that the Initial Bison Herd Reduction Environmental Assessment (EA), which evaluates management actions related to bison on Grand Canyon’s North Rim, is available for public review and comment. The EA was prepared in collaboration with cooperating agencies — the Arizona Game and Fish Department, the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the InterTribal Buffalo Council.

The bison on the park’s North Rim descended from animals brought to northern Arizona in 1906. In the 1990s the bison herd, which the Arizona Game and Fish Department has managed in the House Rock Wildlife Area on the Kaibab National Forest since 1929, began venturing onto the North Rim of the park. Most of the bison herd now spends a majority of its time inside the park.

Biologists estimate that since the early 1990s the herd has grown from approximately 100 bison to between 400 to 600 bison that currently roam the Kaibab Plateau. Estimates also show that this bison herd could grow to nearly 800 bison in the next three years and as large as 1200 to 1500 animals within ten years if further management actions are not taken.

Given the current bison distribution, abundance, and density and the expected growth of this herd, the NPS is concerned about increased impacts on park resources, such as water, vegetation, soils, and archaeological sites; and on values such as visitor experience and wilderness character.

The purpose of the actions evaluated in this EA are to (1) quickly reduce bison population density in collaboration with other agencies with jurisdiction for bison management on the Kaibab Plateau, and (2) protect Grand Canyon National Park resources and values from the impacts of a steadily growing bison population.

Through the preferred alternative, the NPS, working together with cooperating agencies and partners, would reduce the bison herd to fewer than 200 animals using lethal culling with skilled volunteers and non-lethal capture and removal. Considering the size of the current bison population, the proposed herd reduction could be achievable over a period of three to five years and is consistent with recommendations for a herd size that would reduce or prevent impacts on park resources.

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The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

The NPS seeks the public's thoughtful review and comments during the 30-day comment period, which concludes on June 7, 2017. The EA is available on the NPS Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) website at: [http://parkplanning.nps.gov/grca\\_bison](http://parkplanning.nps.gov/grca_bison).

The NPS will host three in-person open house meetings during the comment period, as follows:

Tuesday, May 16, 2017  
DoubleTree by Hilton  
1175 West Route 66  
Flagstaff, AZ 86001  
6 pm to 8 pm MST (Arizona)

Thursday, May 18, 2017  
Ben Avery Facility–Activities Center  
4044 W. Black Canyon Blvd  
Phoenix, AZ 85086  
5 pm to 7 pm MST (Arizona)

Tuesday, May 23, 2017  
Holiday Inn Express and Hotel  
217 South 100 East  
Kanab, UT 84747  
6 pm to 8 pm MDT (Utah); 5 pm to 7 pm MST (Arizona)

The NPS also plans to hold one informational web-based meeting on Tuesday, May 30, 2017 from 5 pm to 6 pm MST (Arizona). Registration for the web-based meeting and more information about the open house can be found at [http://www.parkplanning.nps.gov/grca\\_bison](http://www.parkplanning.nps.gov/grca_bison).

Interested parties can submit comments either electronically on the PEPC website (the preferred method of receiving comments); via U.S. Postal Service at Grand Canyon National Park, PO Box 129, Attn: Bison Management Plan EA, Grand Canyon, AZ 86023; or at one of the in-person public meetings. Public comments will not be accepted during the web-based meeting; participants will be directed to the PEPC website to enter comments.

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