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## Arapaho Buffalo Restoration

<b>Applying Organization</b>	Wind River Tribal Buffalo Initiative	<b>Application Date</b>	5/15/2026
<b>Applying Contact</b>	Kaycee Prevedel	<b>Status</b>	Submitted
<b>Record Type</b>	Member Collective	<b>Created By</b>	Kaycee Prevedel, 5/13/2026, 8:46 AM
		<b>Create Account</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Project Overview

<b>Project Name</b>	Arapaho Buffalo Restoration	<b>Requested Amount</b>	\$50,000.00
<b>Project/Campaign Name</b>	Arapaho Buffalo Restoration		
<b>Type of Project</b>	Restoration; Management Planning	<b>Project Multiple Locations</b>	
<b>Project Location (State or Territory)</b>	WY	<b>Longitude</b>	108.71625° W
<b>Latitude</b>	43.14100° N,		

### Organization Details

<b>Organization Name</b>	Wind River Tribal Buffalo Initiative	<b>Primary address for organization</b>	PO Box 14 Kinnear, Wyoming 82501 United States
<b>Contact Name</b>	Kaycee Prevedel	<b>Contact Title</b>	Partnerships Director
<b>Contact Email Address</b>	kaycee@windriverbuffalo.org		
<b>Annual Operating Budget</b>	\$1,500,000.00	<b>Tax Status/Organization Type</b>	501c3 Organization
<b>Staff Size</b>	12	<b>Main Phone</b>	3073994402
<b>Total Membership</b>		<b>Organization Website/Social Media Feed</b>	https://windriverbuffalo.com
<b>BIPOC-led</b>	Yes	<b>C-Suite Staff</b>	80% Indigenous Board, Staff, and Indigenous-led

### Grant Details

<b>Awarded Amount</b>		<b>Awarded Date</b>	
<b>Funding Program</b>			
<b>Primary Project Type</b>		<b>Secondary Project Type</b>	
<b>Term Start Date</b>		<b>Term End Date</b>	

### Proposal Questions

<b>Mission/History Of Organization</b>	The Wind River Tribal Buffalo Initiative is a Native nonprofit whose mission is land repatriation through Buffalo restoration, promoting youth engagement and	<b>Location Details</b>	The Northern Arapaho buffalo herd resides near the Wind River, in a place where a connected migratory corridor is possible, stretching from Wind River
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opportunities, and securing food sovereignty for Wind River Indigenous communities. WRTBI was established in 2023 and has quickly grown into a reputable Indigenous-led nonprofit that helps two Tribal Nations get land back, restore and manage buffalo herds and habitat, and facilitate land use change on the Wind River Indian Reservation in Wyoming, USA.

Reservation land to public land. The Wind River Indian Reservation is 2.2 million acres of well-stewarded land that is a biodiversity hotspot. There have been many conservation successes on the Wind River Reservation, including the very first roadless area, predating the Wilderness Act; Bighorn Sheep and Pronghorn Antelope restoration in the 1980s; large carnivore protections set in place in the 1990s; and the return of Buffalo to the Wind River Reservation in 2016 and designated as wildlife in 2025. Restoring Buffalo revitalizes ancestral ecosystems, reversing degradation and re-establishing native flora and fauna - many traditionally used for ceremony and medicines. The goal is to return it to a state of ecological balance by rematriating Buffalo, promoting cultural and environmental sustainability. The Northern Arapaho Buffalo herd's habitat is expanding, partly due to support from the last Member Collective Grant -- with that comes both land use change, infrastructure, and management tasks.

**Final Success**

The completion of the final stretch of fence for an additional 17,000 acres of Tribal Land marks a massive 850% expansion of the Northern Arapaho herd's habitat, inviting our relatives to return home to the land.

**Impact on Climate and Biodiversity**

Currently, the Arapaho Buffalo Herd sits on ~2,000 acres of reacquired Tribal lands. It is adjacent to Range Unit 24, a large area designated for Buffalo habitat that is also protected Wind River Indian Reservation (WRIR) land. The project to finally get the Buffalo on the ground will create climate resilience by returning a keystone species to its natural environment, which will lead to an increase in biodiversity. The release onto RU24 will connect Buffalo habitat corridors and allow family groups to potentially split into their own herds. With proven success of Buffalo thriving on WRIR rangeland, our org, WRTBI, will continue to advocate for land use change from cattle grazing allotments to Buffalo habitat zones that stretch from the Big Wind River to the Wind River Reservation roadless area, eventually to the Bridger Teton National Forest that is adjacent to the WRIR. This will take connecting multiple more habitat areas and working with the United States Forest Service to ensure the Tribal buffalo herds have sovereign access, under a Tribal/Federal Co-Management agreement. We also want to ensure Tribal management of the herds, regardless of land distinction. This monumental project will be a model for habitat connectivity in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, along with leading Indigenous management regimes across Turtle Island.

**Expected Economic & Recreational Impact**

Tribal communities will benefit directly and indirectly. As the herd grows, so does the opportunity for the return of buffalo to diets, helping with diabetes rates. Ecotourism will also benefit Tribal communities. Restored buffalo herds will

**Strategy & Timeline For Final Success**

Strategy:  
Immediate Support (Months 1-6): Release of family groups of Buffalo onto to Range Unit 24.  
Infrastructure Development (Months 1-12): Weekly assessments of perimeter

attract cultural tourism, supporting local businesses through guided tours and educational programs. Traditional buffalo processing, local crafts, and the draw of ecotourism will generate diverse income streams to the Reservation. Returning buffalo to the landscape provide wildlife viewing opportunities that enhances outdoor recreation, creating deeper connections to the land. The project will also promote sustainable land restoration practices, contributing to long-term economic stability within the Arapaho community.

fencing and gates to ensure herd expansion is sound.  
 Cultural Revitalization (Ongoing): Conduct workshops on buffalo processing and tanning, preserving traditional knowledge.  
 Ecological Monitoring (Ongoing): Document changes in vegetation, soil health, and biodiversity.  
 Herd Expansion (Years 1-5): Gradually increase herd size to 500, allowing for family groups. Currently the Arapaho herd has 130 buffalo and the Eastern Shoshone herd has 160.

Role: The Arapaho Tribe, working closely with WRTBI and the Eastern Shoshone buffalo herd managers, will lead all aspects of herd management, ecological restoration, and community engagement. The Tribe will collaborate with partners for technical expertise and resources.

Timeline:  
 Year 1: Secure funding, provide supplemental feed, finalize fencing, support laborer salary. - This is done.  
 Years 2-5: Complete fencing, restore family groups of Buffalo to RU24, expand herd, monitor ecological impacts, enhance community engagement.

The business community can be a big help with helping to change the paradigm from "Buffalo as livestock" to "Buffalo as wildlife". This is something that we are actively working on within WRTBI -- we hope everyone sees Buffalo as kin to elk, deer, moose, instead of cattle. Buffalo are a native species and frankly, one of the last to be restored to large scales in North America. This effort is Indigenous-led and businesses can help elevate following Indigenous leadership.

1. Increased herd health, evidenced by overall health, weight gain and reduced stress indicators.
2. The return of Buffalo to WRIR lands within the next month (RU24) with a well-attended community release celebration
3. Documented increase in native plant species diversity within Range Unit 24.
4. Establishment of a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or framework for a Tribal/Federal Co-Management agreement with the USFS for the Bridger-Teton National Forest.

**Key Decision Makers**

With Tribal leadership working directly with the USFS Bridger Teton National Forest leadership, the goal is to write into the new forest plan that Tribal buffalo will have sovereign access. This will likely take multiple years and a formal Tribal/Federal Co-Management agreement. However, with other precedents set, like Bears Ears, it is an attainable goal.

**Working With Business Community**

**Elevate Voices**

While WRTBI is an interTribal organization, this project is driven by the needs of the Arapaho Tribe specifically, ensuring their voices are central. Community engagement includes workshops on traditional practices, participation in herd management, and educational programming. Youth are involved in citizen science, creating future stewards. Community events and outreach programs raise awareness and mobilize support for buffalo restoration. Additionally, WRTBI serves as a model for other Tribes wishing to restore Buffalo to their homelands.

**Measurable On-Ground Outcomes**

**TCA Funding Plan**

TCA's support will provide essential funding for infrastructure maintenance and herd health needs including physical restoration onto new habitat, labor, and initial ecological monitoring, enabling the Arapaho Tribe to effectively manage the herd during the critical expansion phase.

**Confidential Items**

**Other Relevant  
Application Details**

This funding would provide a continuation of a project that TCA supported last year!