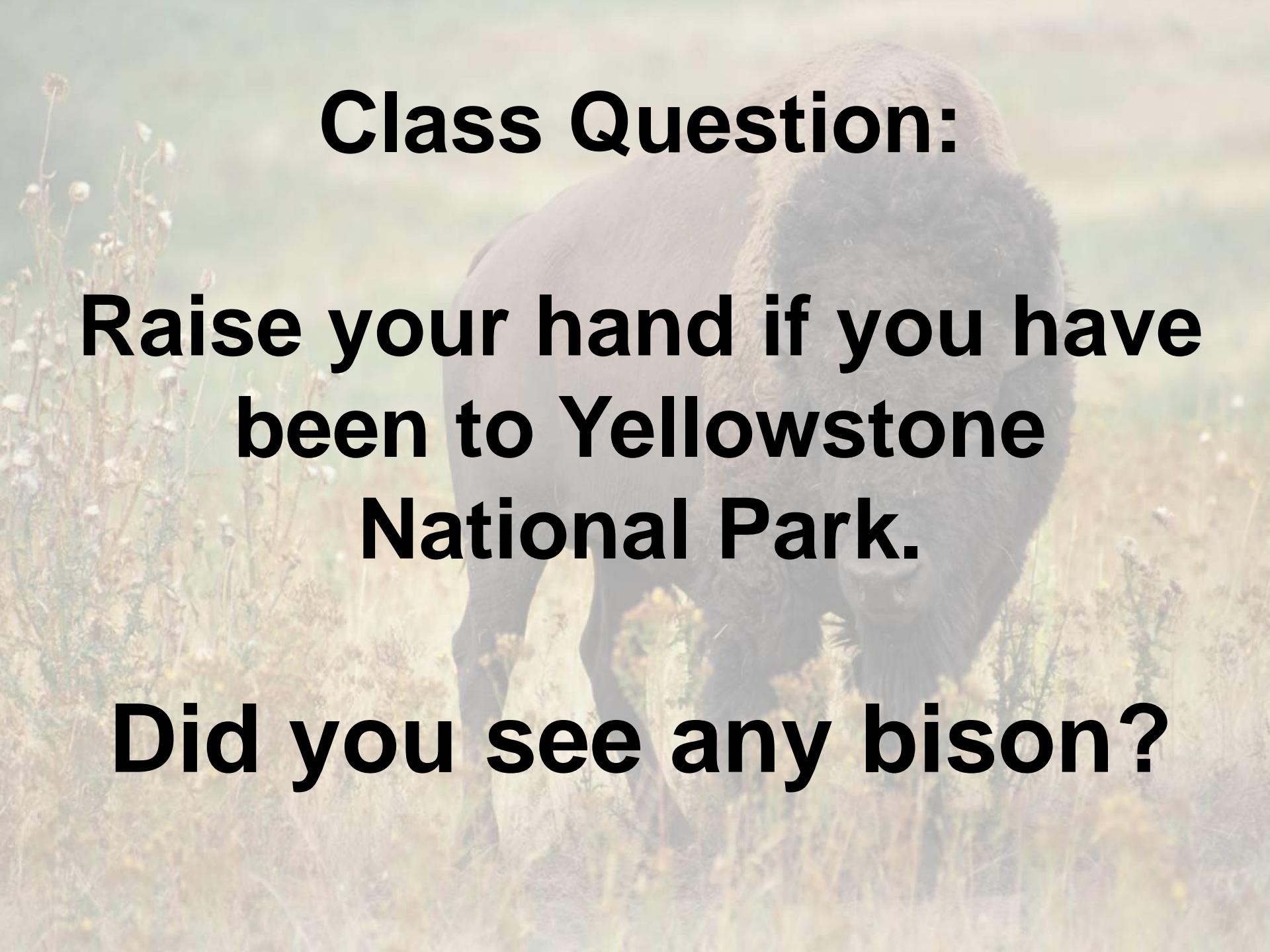


# The Protection, Conservation, and Restoration of Bison

## Science Unit 4: Introductory PowerPoint



Photo Credit: Above: [http://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/02/us/efforts-to-restore-bison-on-the-montana-range-resisted.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/02/us/efforts-to-restore-bison-on-the-montana-range-resisted.html?_r=0) Background Photo: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American\\_bison](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_bison).

A bison is the central focus of the image, standing in a field of tall, dry grass. The bison is dark brown and has a thick, shaggy coat. The background is a soft-focus landscape of green and yellow grasses under a bright sky. The text is overlaid on the image in a large, bold, black font.

**Class Question:**

**Raise your hand if you have  
been to Yellowstone  
National Park.**

**Did you see any bison?**



# The Beginnings of Bison Conservation: Yellowstone National Park



- Yellowstone National Park was created in 1872
- Bison became one of the first protected species in this new park
- Poaching (illegally killing protected bison) continued inside the park into the 1880s



Photo Credit: Top Left: <http://durangoherald.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20120330/SPORTS05/703309975>, Bottom Left:

[http://www.nps.gov/features/yell/slidesfile/history/1946\\_1999/structures/Page.htm](http://www.nps.gov/features/yell/slidesfile/history/1946_1999/structures/Page.htm) Bottom Right: Photo Credit: [http://paradiseworld.com/?attachment\\_id=885](http://paradiseworld.com/?attachment_id=885)



# Continued Protection in Yellowstone National Park

- The **Lacey Act of 1894** enforced protection of bison by allowing the government to prosecute (take to court) any poachers killing bison.
- However, illegal hunting (poaching) of bison continued, resulting in just 25 bison in the park in 1901.
- Congress responded by closely managing the bison in the park, fencing them off in enclosures.
- By the mid-1950s, bison in Yellowstone National Park had recovered to a sizeable herd of 1,500. There was still a long way to go though.



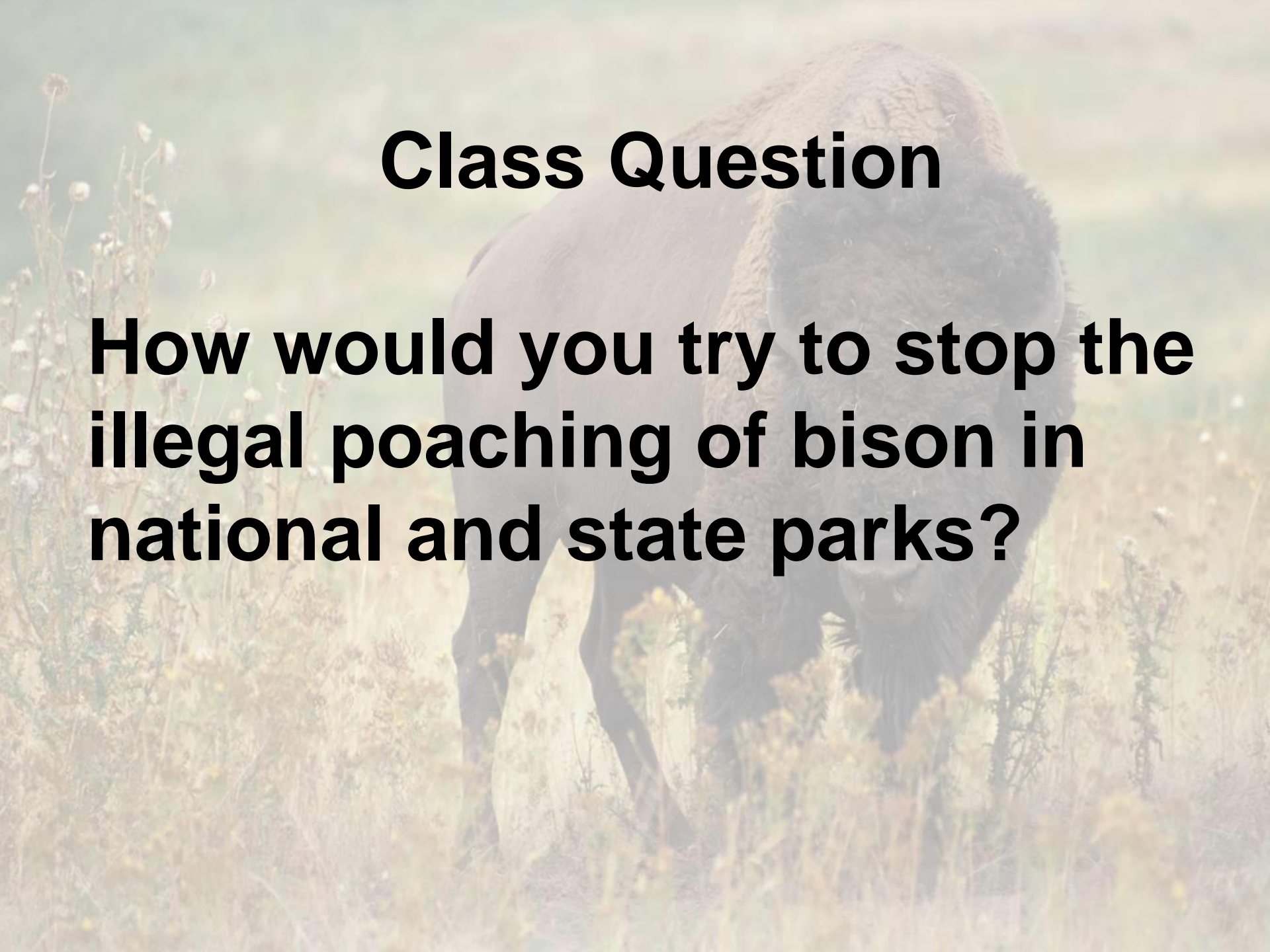
Photo Credit: The Durango Herald:

<http://durangoherald.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20120330/SPORTS05/703309975>



Photo Credit: Wikipedia Commons:

[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Herd\\_of\\_American\\_Bison,\\_browsing\\_in\\_safety,\\_Yellowstone\\_National\\_Park,\\_Wyo.,\\_by\\_Keystone\\_View\\_Company.png](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Herd_of_American_Bison,_browsing_in_safety,_Yellowstone_National_Park,_Wyo.,_by_Keystone_View_Company.png)

A bison is shown in a field of tall, dry grasses. The bison is dark brown and has a thick, shaggy mane around its head. It is looking down and slightly to the right. The background is a soft-focus landscape with more grass and some distant trees under a hazy sky.

# **Class Question**

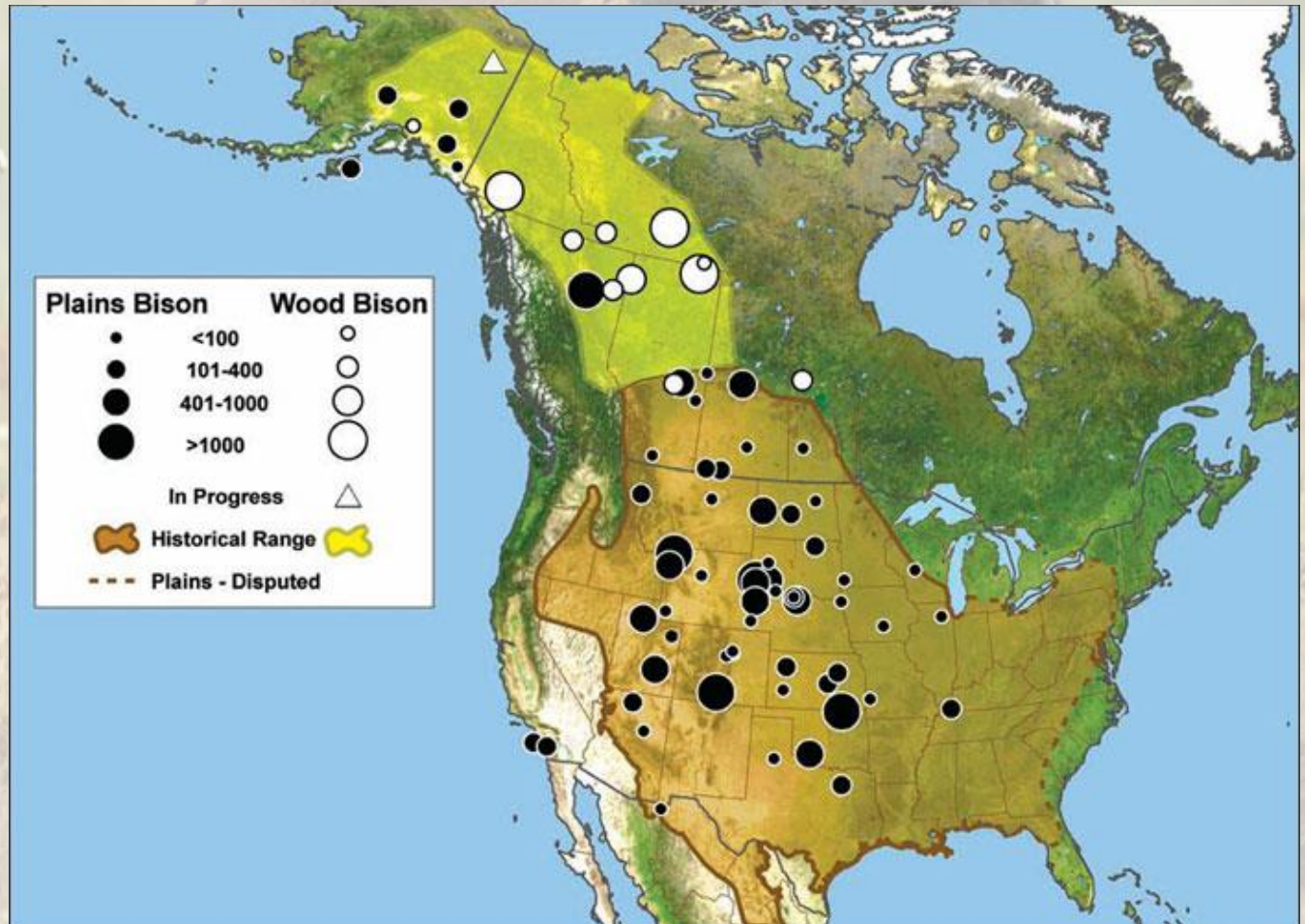
**How would you try to stop the illegal poaching of bison in national and state parks?**



# Bison Management: Groups and Organizations Currently Managing Bison

*Map of historic bison range and current herd locations*

1. Native American Tribes
2. National & State Parks
3. Wildlife Preserves
4. Private Ranches



# Challenges and Concerns with Bison Conservation and Restoration

- **Disease:** It is a major management concern, especially *brucellosis* (an infection that causes still-born calves)
- **Overpopulation:** Has prompted some park managers to reduce the bison herd size through capture or shooting
- **Over-Grazing:** Some concerns for decreasing environmental and habitat quality has led to reducing the size of the bison herd



Photo Credit: <http://www.nps.gov/wica/learn/management/bison-management-11.htm>



# Wood bison restoration in Canada



Photo Credit: <https://www.alaskawildlife.org/2015/03/restoration-of-wood-bison/>



# The Return of Bison to the Tribes

- Arikara, Mandan, and Hidatsa have received over 900 bison
- Intertribal Bison Cooperative has helped in the transportation of bison to various tribes
- Today, more than 50 tribes have bison herds
- Some tribes are also attempting to manage herds more like wildlife and less like livestock



Photo Credit: <http://www.conservemontana.org/content/restore-wild-bison-to-montana/cnmBA7C623F212912AB9>

A bison is shown in a field of tall grass and wildflowers, looking down. The image is slightly faded to allow text to be overlaid.

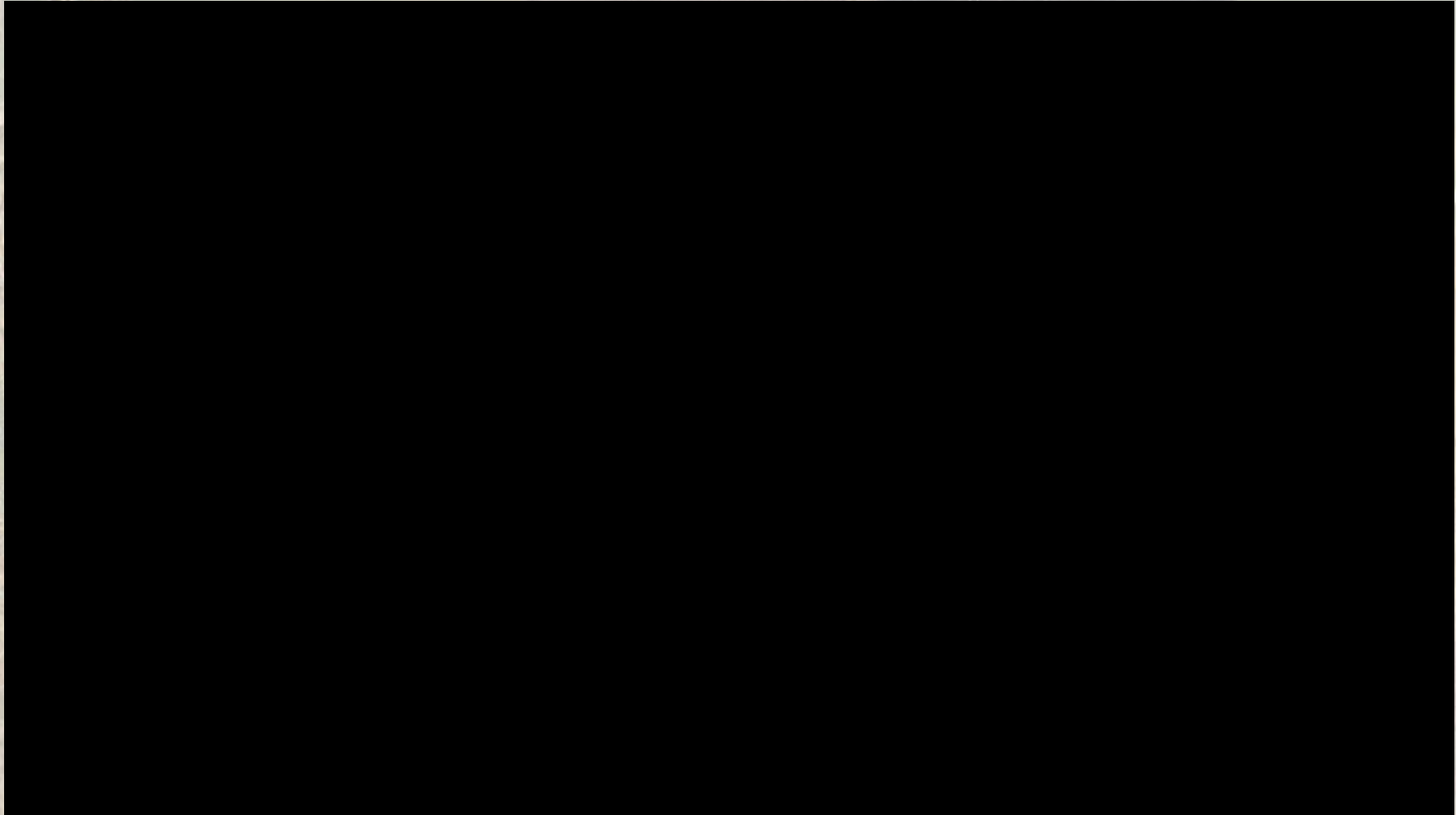
## **Class Question**

**What differences might there be between “Wildlife” Management and “Livestock” Management?**



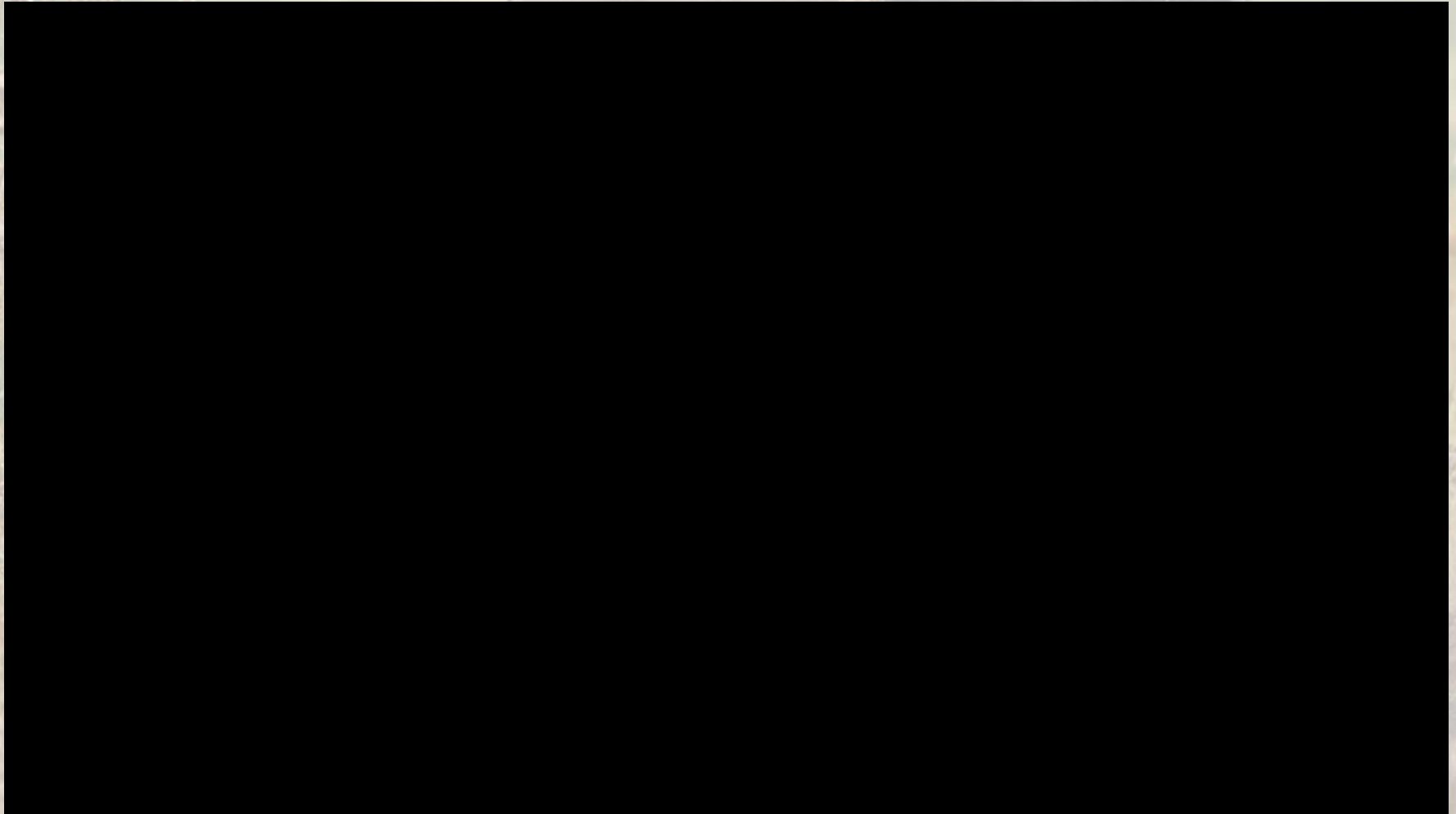
# Efforts in Bison Restoration in Montana

**Home at Last: Journey of the Bison:** If unable to view the embedded YouTube Video, the film clip can also be found at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hNkOWYm9Tbc#t=186>



# Efforts in Bison Restoration in Montana

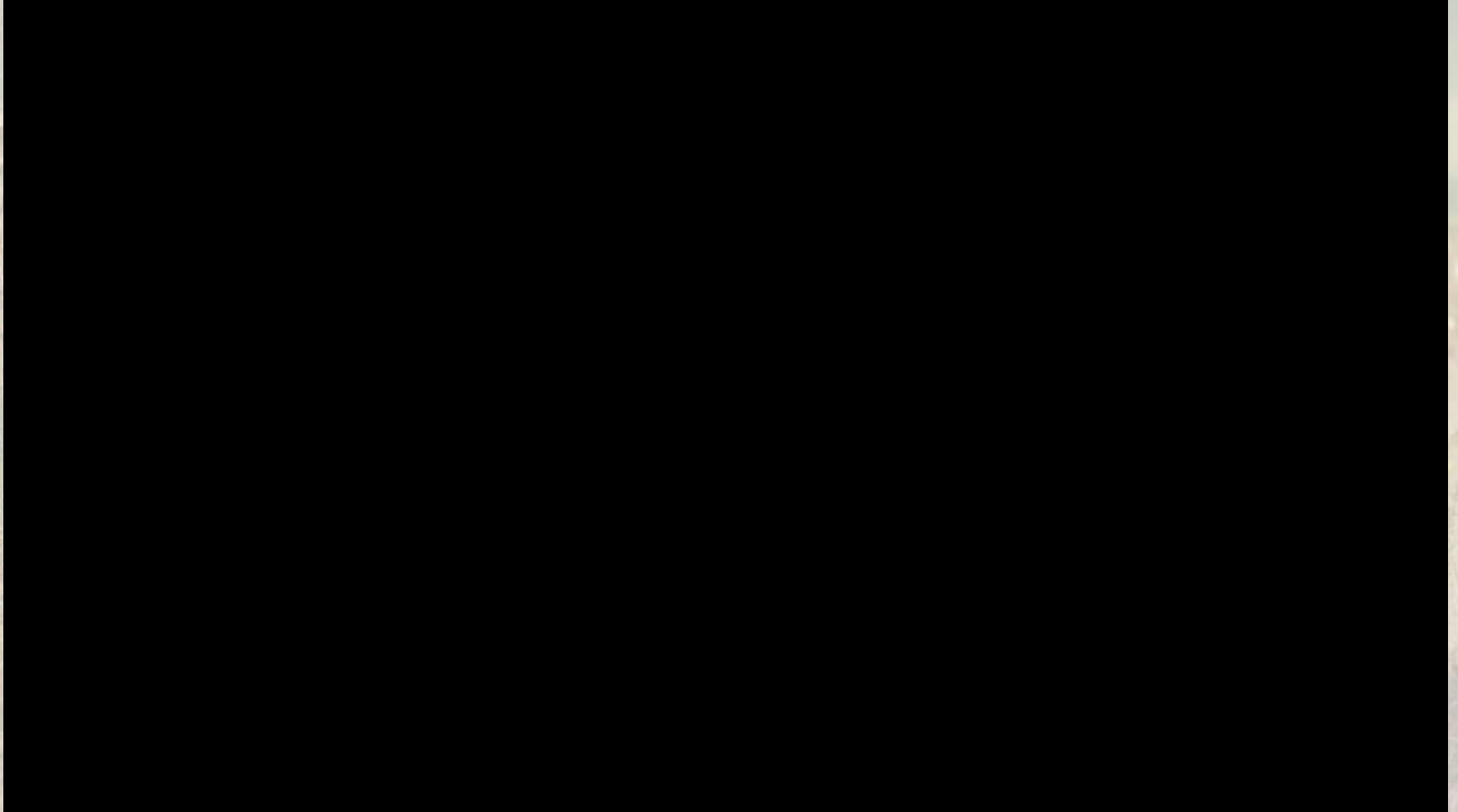
**innii Initiative: Return of the Buffalo:** If unable to view the embedded YouTube Video, the film clip can also be found at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6LJfPMoGMAg#t=20>

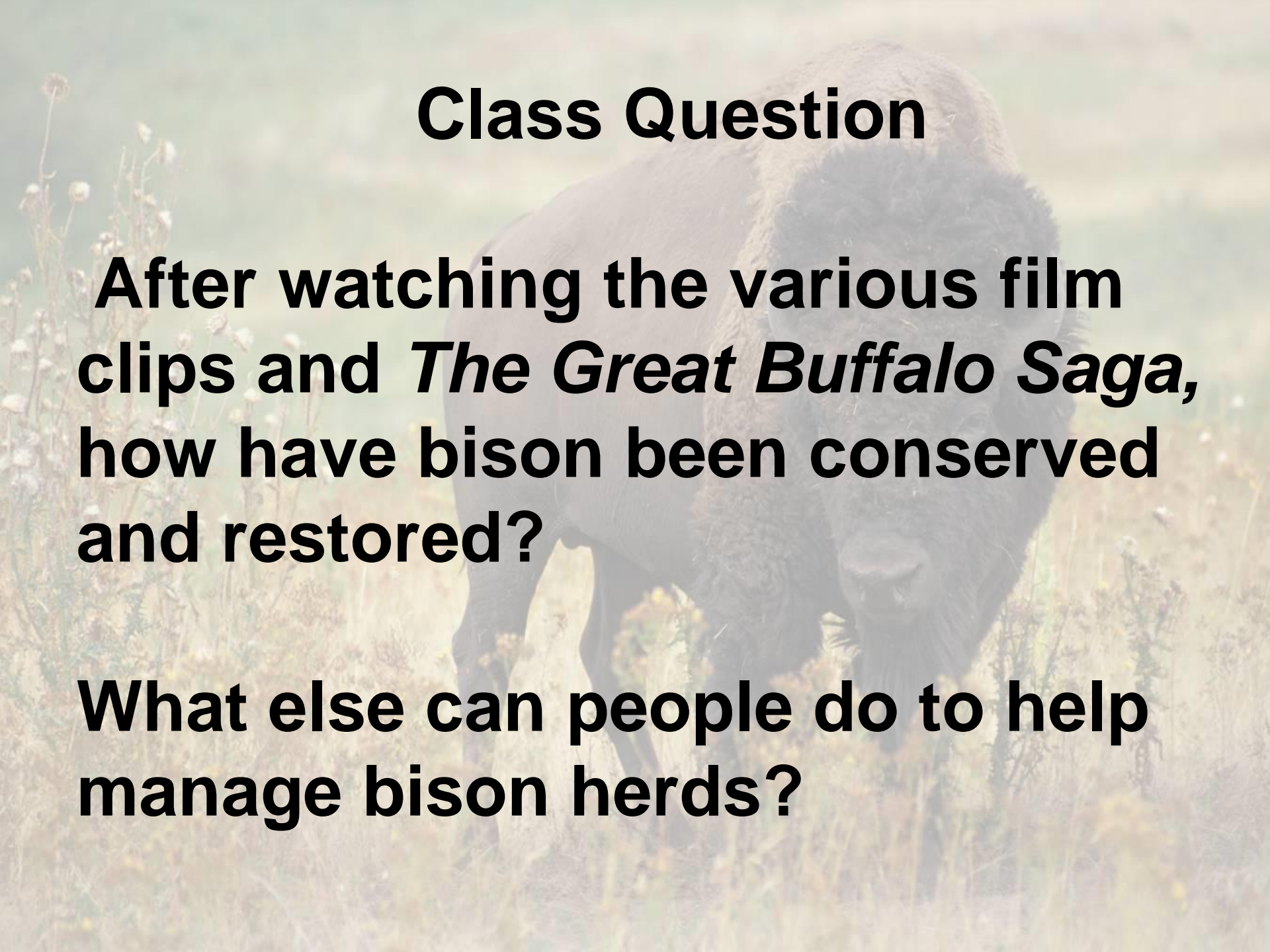




# Efforts in Bison Restoration in Montana

**Restoring Bison:** If unable to view the embedded YouTube Video, the film clip can also be found at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hlpHJLcmK2o>



A bison is shown in a field of tall grass and wildflowers, looking towards the camera. The background is slightly blurred, emphasizing the bison.

# **Class Question**

**After watching the various film clips and *The Great Buffalo Saga*, how have bison been conserved and restored?**

**What else can people do to help manage bison herds?**



# Brochure Assignment

- For your brochure assignment, think about these different conservation strategies. Then, select one and make a brochure advertising/describing it.
- For example, some strategies presented in the films were (1) fenced, protected reserves (bison managed as wildlife), (2) bison ranches (managed as livestock), (3) national or state parks, (4) Native American herds
- Once you have selected the type of strategy you will use for your hypothetical (pretend) conservation area, design a brochure advertising and explaining your conservation area. You should try to answer:
  - How big is it?
  - Where is it located?
  - How many bison will there be?
  - Who will it be accessible to?  
(for example, can there be visitors/tourists, hunters, or is it off limits to everybody?)
  - What will you call it?
  - How will you manage the number of bison?
  - Will bison be treated as livestock or as wildlife?
  - How will you explain to people why bison are important?

**Most of all: HAVE FUN!!!**