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Subject: Buffalo Culture

Buffalo Culture



The American Bison or Buffalo is the most significant animal to many Plains American Indian Nations. Buffalo once roamed from the Appalachian Mountains to the West Coast, and from as far north as the Great Slave Lake in the Northwest Territories south down into Mexico. At the beginning of the 19th century, buffalo numbers were estimated from 20 million to 60 million. For thousands of years, Tribes relied heavily on the buffalo. Every part of the buffalo was used for food, clothing, shelter, tools, jewelry, and ceremonies.



“The Great Slaughter” 1820 to 1880

The buffalo population plummeted from millions to fewer than 1,000 by 1890



Today, about **360,000** plains buffalo are privately owned as domestic livestock while 31,000 are considered wild/ public owned.

The Department of the Interior manages about **10,300 bison**



8,000 in ten national parks units

1,600 in seven National Wildlife Refuges

700 on Bureau of Land Management Lands in Utah



60+ tribes have brought back the Buffalo to their families, traditional lands and ways of life.

80+ tribes are in the Buffalo Council which includes 32 million acres of lands, managing 30,000+ animals.

An estimated **25,000+** Buffalo are managed by Native Nations