



# NIIBIN MASHKODE-BIZ INITIATIVE ("SUMMER BUFFALO")

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### Dear TTR Members,

Through this newsletter, I would like to share a brief update of the current implementation stage of the Niibin Mashkode-biz project.

As mentioned in our last newsletter, this project has three phases, in which we recently completed the research and marking components.

During Phase 1, TTR was able to identify the best and most suitable area of the reserve to develop a bison ranch, as well as develop a Business Plan to clearly identify the financial requirements to implement the Bison Ranch operation. These two important deliverables have been completed.

In addition to this, we were able to execute the training portion of the project, where 14 community members participated in a 5 day training program that was held on March 22nd to 26th, 2021. The training was comprised of 6 theoretical units (Bison History, Traditional Uses of Bison, The Bison Industry Today, Raising Bison, Commercialization of Bison, Case Studies) and a practical unit (site visit) at the Ebb and Flow First Nation Game Ranch located at the Ebb& Flow First Nation. In addition to this, a special unit was developed to share the main findings of the Environmental Screening, Preliminary Site Plans, and Class D Construction Cost Estimate for the planned Bison Herd.



At this time, we are working on the development of a Marketing Plan and Research report to identify and explore the economic/social potential for traditionally tanned hides and cultural products produced using buffalo hides, bones, horns, and skulls, and how to introduce this new First Nation initiative into the regional marketplace.

Phases II and III of the project will see the establishing of a small herd of Bison, and to build the required infrastructure in the community. These phases are not yet implemented and their execution relies on TTR's decision to move forward, along with the securing of funding.

For more information about this program, please send an email to: [dclarke@kokopelli.ca](mailto:dclarke@kokopelli.ca)



## Environmental Screening, Preliminary Site Plans, and Class D Construction Cost Estimates for a Bison Herd Tootinaowaziibeeng Treaty Reserve 292

View of the proposed bison handling facilities location as seen from the road at the southeast corner of the site. View looking northwest.



A total of 10 sites were reviewed for developing a bison ranch in the community. After considering all technical options for the 10 sites, Site 1 was the preferred site location as there was ample crop land that was decreasing in yield that could be converted into forage land, deforestation was not required, the riparian area would provide important natural habitat for bison, and there was room for future expansion to the northwest.

The report concluded that establishing a bison herd within TTR is expected to significantly improve economic growth and development within the community as well as improve nutrition. The bison will be incorporated into school programs, unemployment assistance programs, and addictions programs to help the community heal. The bison project is expected to strengthen community involvement and provide cultural revitalization.

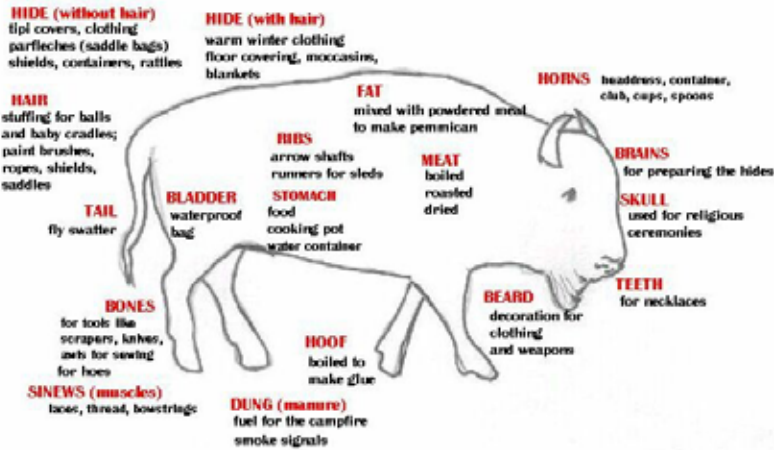
Bison are expected to increase vegetation and habitat diversity, add organic matter and stabilize soil, as well as reduce sedimentation and nutrient runoff.

The report also identified that **there are no significant long term negative effects expected with proper mitigation**. Bison are natural components of the prairies and by moving bison between pastures to optimize vegetation health, a bison herd can thrive while improving the environment.

Please send an email to [dclarke@kokopelli.ca](mailto:dclarke@kokopelli.ca) if you would like to receive a complete copy of this report.

# DID YOU KNOW

that Bison used to be “the supermarket” of our ancestors?  
The following diagram shows all:



Before guns and horses arrived in North America First Nations people hunted the bison on foot. They used spears and later bows and arrows for the hunt. They had several ways to capture the bison. Bison, was a significant resource for Indigenous Peoples for food and raw materials.

In the summer several bands would get together to hunt the bison. More bison were killed this way. The meat was divided according to the needs of each family.

The hunt was the basis of the Plains way of life. Meat provided nutrition, sinew and bone became tools, and hides became clothing and shelter. The hunt and its products gave rise to, and supported, complex social, political and cultural institutions.



## BISON INDUSTRY TODAY:

Today, the growing popularity of bison meat is based in a large part on the fact that bison producers aim to continue restoring bison herds across the North American continent by connecting with consumers who value the natural qualities of this hardy native species that has evolved to thrive in the diverse North American ecosystem.

In particular:

- Bison is a natural component of a healthy diet. Bison is low in fat, high in protein and iron, and has a great cholesterol profile.
- Bison is a natural, sustainable meat. Bison are an essential part of the North American ecosystem, so bison ranching is beneficial to the environment.
- Bison tastes great. Chefs and everyday cooks across the country have discovered the great taste and versatility of bison meat.

And although, the main use of bison is for consumption (meat products), there are other parts of the bison that are still popular today:

- Skulls – for decorative purposes
- Horns – are made into decorative polished costume jewelry and buttons
- Hair – is manufactured into bison down and produced into sweaters coats and robes
- Hides – tanned and manufactured into leather furniture, hats, coats, vests, handbags, shoes and boots



## MEET THE WINNER OF LOGO CONTEST!

Congratulations to Robert Flatfoot who participated in logo contest and won \$500.00 cash. We want to thank Robert for illustrating an amazing logo for our program!

