

AWA to Participate in Managing the Ronald Lake Bison Herd

The Ronald Lake bison herd range is slightly south of the southeastern corner of Wood Buffalo National Park and overlaps the traditional territory of the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation (ACFN). A 2016 article in the *Wild Lands Advocate* examined the circumstances of the Ronald Lake Bison Herd at a time when bison, in the government's eyes, were not considered wildlife in Alberta. Despite the fact that the herd was known to be disease free it wasn't until a 2016 amendment to the Alberta Wildlife Regulation that the Ronald Lake herd received protective status as non-game wildlife.

Three years later, in December 2019, Alberta Environment and Parks Minister Nixon wrote to invite AWA to participate as a member of the Ronald Lake Bison Herd Cooperative Management Board. In August 2020, Minister Nixon confirmed that the board will meet in the fall of 2020. The board will advise the minister on "mat-



ters related to the long-term sustainability of the Ronald Lake Bison Herd, including sustainability of the Indigenous traditional use of and cultural connection to the herd."

AWA is pleased that Carolyn Campbell, AWA Conservation Specialist, will be our representative on the board.

- Christyann Olson