



CATALINA ISLAND CONSERVANCY

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New Bison to Join Catalina Island Herd

Catalina's wildlands are a portal to exploring historic California

Avalon, Calif. – Bison have played a significant role in the cultural heritage of Catalina Island for nearly 100 years and will be roaming Catalina Island far into the future. Catalina Island Conservancy is working with the Laramie Foothills Bison Conservation Herd to bring two pregnant female bison to Catalina Island. The new additions will arrive in early December and supplement the genetic diversity of the current bison herd on Catalina Island with the valuable genetics of heritage bison.

The herd – managed by Colorado State University, the City of Fort Collins, Colorado, and Larimer County – was established with nine adult females and one male calf in November 2015. It has now grown to over 100 bison, which has made it possible to share bison with tribal and conservation herds across the country. The bison have valuable genetics from the Yellowstone National Park Herd and, thanks to science implemented at CSU by Assistant Professor Jennifer Barfield and her team, the animals are also disease-free.

"We are proud to continue our mission of collaborating with conservationists through this new partnership with Catalina Island Conservancy," said Barfield, a reproductive physiologist. "We look forward to watching our animals find a new home with the herd on Catalina Island, where they can contribute to the growth of a truly unique and iconic herd."

Bison have freely roamed Catalina Island since 1924. Fourteen bison were brought to the Island for the filming of an adaptation of a Zane Grey novel, believed to be "The Vanishing American." There are currently approximately 100 bison on Catalina Island. The new animals will integrate into Catalina Island's free-ranging bison herd in December and are expected to give birth in the spring.

"With goals of maintaining the health of the land and providing public benefit, Catalina Island Conservancy maintains its three-part mission of conservation, education and recreation. The bison population is a key example of this delicate balance," said Catalina Island Conservancy President & CEO Tony Budrovich. "The unique opportunity to see American bison on Catalina Island brings wildlife lovers from around the world to learn about a species they might

otherwise not have a chance to see roam. While here, they also learn about Catalina's endemic species, special Mediterranean climate and importance of conservation."

With its location close to urban areas, Catalina provides a gateway to nature for a diverse population to experience and learn about wildlife and nature just steps away from home. The best way to view bison is through a Conservancy Eco Tour. Bison are wild animals. People should stay at least 125 feet away from bison at all times.

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About the Conservancy

Formed in 1972, the Catalina Island Conservancy is one of California's oldest land trusts. Its mission is to be a responsible steward of its lands through a balance of conservation, education and recreation. Through its ongoing efforts, the Conservancy protects the magnificent natural and cultural heritage of Santa Catalina Island, stewarding more than 42,000 acres of land and more than 60 miles of rugged shoreline. It provides an airport and 50 miles of biking and 165 miles of hiking opportunities within its road and trail system. The Conservancy conducts educational outreach through two nature centers, its Wrigley Memorial & Botanic Garden and guided experiences in the Island's rugged interior. Twenty miles from the mainland, the Island is a treasure trove of historical and archaeological sites. It also contains numerous rare and endangered animals and plants. The Island is home to more than 60 species that are found only on Catalina. For additional information, please visit www.catalinaconservancy.org.