

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Chairman, I have been listening to my friend from Montana's presentation, and I noted the reference to mad cow disease. Would that we had the same zeal on the part of the Department of Agriculture to protect American consumers from mad cow disease, a sort of zero tolerance that is being advocated here dealing with the bison. It may well be the reason we have only discovered one case of mad cow disease in the United States is because the American consumer for years has been eating the evidence. We have such a limited, tiny sampling process at present, unfortunately, our not being able to find out in a wide and broad fashion whether or not we have a problem. I note no small amount of irony that we are going to prosecute the poor hapless beef producer in the Midwest who wanted to test all their beef for mad cow so that it could be exported again to Japan.

Listening to the debate here today, the Chair of the Committee on Agriculture is making a compelling case for more aggressive action for elk, but as has been pointed out from my colleague from New Hampshire, my colleague from New York, there has not yet been a documented case dealing with the bison. Never a confirmed incident of brucellosis transmission in the wild from buffalo to cattle. Yet we have got 13,000 Yellowstone elk, some of which are infected after we have documented the problems, that are allowed to wander unfettered to federal land outside the park. It seems at least from a distance that Montana has a different philosophy from Wyoming.

I see my colleague from Wyoming perhaps approaching the well, but it seems that Wyoming does not deem buffalo to be a threat to the cattle because for more than 4 decades buffalo with brucellosis and cattle have grazed together in the Grand Teton National Park evidently without incident.

It would seem to me that what has been proposed in this amendment is a simple common sense approach to just have a 1-year moratorium. It is not seeking to establish in law at this point, a prohibition, but giving an opportunity to array the evidence, having an opportunity to look at less invasive solutions. Maybe we only have killed three by shooting them, but my understanding is that we had 277 that were sent to slaughter. It may be a distinction without a difference if one is a bison whether they are shot or sent away to be slaughtered. I would hope that there would be an opportunity for us to think about how we are upsetting these natural ecosystems. I would hope that we could look in a broader context for wildlife management. I would hope that there would be an opportunity for people to not single out bison for slaughter when it appears, from what we have heard on the floor today, that the problem instead is one of infected elk which are treated differently and will continue to be treated differently.

I would respectfully suggest that we adopt the amendment from the gentleman from New York and the gentleman from New Hampshire, give us a year's breathing room, be able to find ways to solve this problem in the future in ways that deal with a more humane treatment for

our American Great Plains icon.

Mrs. CUBIN. Madam Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

(Mrs. CUBIN asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CUBIN. Madam Chairman, with all the misinformation that is floating around in this Chamber today, I hardly know where to start. But one place I will start is I would request that the Members on the other side who have supported and offered this amendment ask the Sierra Club or the Natural Resources Defense Council to update the notes that they give them to speak on the floor because there is so much misinformation that is out there. And I will clarify some of that.

It is amazing to me that the people who are offering and supporting this amendment I know for a fact have never attended the Greater Yellowstone Interagency Brucellosis Committee meetings that have been going on for several years. All the stakeholders are involved. The environmentalists are at the table as well as the Park Service and the other stakeholders. Were this a goodwill amendment, they would have more information than what they read in their radical environmentalist journals.

While I understand that some folks do not approve of the management techniques used by the Greater Yellowstone Interagency Brucellosis Committee, this amendment is truly misguided. By the way, to my colleague from Oregon, Wyoming does have a brucellosis problem, and Wyoming is not a brucellosis-free State anymore. That happened early this year because herds of cattle were commingling with elk. And so once again it would be really good if the gentleman could have current, accurate information before he delves into something that is so sensitive.

It has been said, and it is entirely true, that the population of bison in the park is truly degrading the environment because there are too many. As I said, my State of Wyoming lost its brucellosis-free status earlier this spring due to the commingling of brucellosis-infected wildlife in Yellowstone in the ecosystem with domestic cattle herds this year. Some estimates indicate that this has cost the agricultural community in Wyoming \$22 million already, and the year is only half over. I think a vote for this amendment will be a vote against those agricultural

families.

There is a delicate balancing act for all of the parties involved to address the needs of the environment, the federal and private stakeholders. Bison numbers are at capacity, and that is not an issue that is even up for debate. According to everyone, the bison has reached its total capacity in the Yellowstone ecosystem. We have to actively manage this herd so that we can preserve the ecosystem. To not do so would upset the greater Yellowstone ecosystem.

This amendment would make the decade-long efforts of public and private stakeholders in vain by limiting the use of federal funds to aid in Park Service management efforts that result in the reduction of the bison herd. By taking one of the Park Service's tools out of their tool box in bison and brucellosis management, this amendment reduces our ability to effectively control the bison herd at a time when its numbers are at maximum capacity.

I want the Members to know this amendment will not reduce the reduction of bison leaving Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks. They will continue to leave. And what will happen is the surrounding States will take a more active role in reduction activities to protect their livestock industries with or without the aid of the Park Service.

So if my colleagues do not like the way the animals are killed, that is one thing. But the fact is the numbers have to be reduced. This is nothing more than feel good legislation that ignores the facts, all the stakeholders' concerns, and the real world lack of a magic solution bullet to fix this problem. There simply is not one.

This is bad policy. It is bad for the environment. It is bad for the American West.

I do think it is ironic that these easterners, with the exception of my friend from Oregon, offer amendments about a very serious issue of which they have very little knowledge. I noticed the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY) shaking his head no when the fact was brought forward that three bison were shot last year. That is the case.

I ask my friends to vote against this amendment and suggest that the people who have made

the amendment offer their advice to the Buffalo Bills. Maybe then they could beat the Denver Broncos.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore (Mrs. Biggert). The time of the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. Cubin) has expired.

(On request of Mr. Blumenauer, and by unanimous consent, Mrs. Cubin was allowed to proceed for 2 additional minutes.)

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Chairman, will the gentlewoman yield?

Mrs. CUBIN. I yield to the gentleman from Oregon.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Chairman, because, as fellow westerners, I did not want there to be a misunderstanding, what I said when I was on the floor earlier was that there had been four decades of having buffalo grazing in the Grand Teton Park with cattle without incident. Does the gentlewoman have evidence that I misspoke, that there have been problems in the last four decades between the buffalo and the cattle in the Grand Teton National Park?

Mrs. CUBIN. Madam Chairman, actually I cannot answer that specifically for Grand Teton National Park, but I can say that the fact is there is evidence now that brucellosis was spread from elk to cattle. That is a fact, which my colleague said has never happened.