

## Return of Bison Brings Healing and Opportunity

On October 22nd, 2021 REDCO's Wolakota Buffalo Range released 60 bison. The addition of buffalo brought the current population of the herd to nearly 400, and upcoming acquisitions will bring the size of the herd to 900 by the end of next month, which will make Wolakota the largest Native-managed bison herd in North America. This feat is especially impressive given that just a year ago there were no buffalo roaming Wolakota's pastures.

"What makes us so strong is that we look generations ahead," said Jillian Waln, who moderated the event. Waln, the Community Engagement Coordinator for REDCO and Sicangu CDC added, "We might not reap the benefits of this project, but future generations to come definitely will."

"It's important that we work together," said Tribal President Scott Herman. "When we all work together, we become stronger." Herman reiterated the Tribe's support for the project and recognized the hard work of the staff in making infrastructure upgrades to the ranch.

Wizipan Little Elk, who was REDCO's CEO throughout the launch of Wolakota acknowledged the work of previous generations of Indigenous activists, celebrated the rapid growth of the project, and acknowledged the many partners that have made it possible. "[The project supporters] are like a tipi. If you take out one of the poles, the tipi falls and does not exist." Then he spoke directly to the youth. "We want you to do even bigger, and better, and bolder things than. That's our dream. That's our hope. That's our prayer."

The next speaker was Nick Tilsen, the President and CEO of NDN Collective, which has provided financial support to the project. "It's not just a buffalo project – it's about rebuilding our way of life as a people. There's a direct correlation between the healing of the land and the healing of the buffalo and the healing of our people."

"Is it possible that the best days for our people are ahead of us and not behind us?" Tilsen challenged. "If we actually believe that, it requires us to take action today."

Before the buffalo release, Duane Hollow Horn Bear and Sage Fast Dog led the group in a song and ceremony to welcome the buffalo home.

Tatanka and the Lakota once walked together from Wind Cave. Though both populations have experienced hardship they are once again joining forces, this time, to bring about climate, economic, and social justice.



*The first of 60 buffalo emerge.*



*Jillian Waln, REDCO Community Engagement Coordinator, speaks.*



*The 60 buffalo make their way to their new home.*



*Duane Hollow Horn Bear addresses attendees at the celebration.*

## With Winter Approaching, Sicangu Propane Delivers More than Fuel

It doesn't take much time with Travis Eagle Deer to sense the passion he has for serving his community. Eagle Deer is the General Manager for Sicangu Propane, a subsidiary of the Rosebud Economic Development Corporation (REDCO). "Even though we are a business, at the end of the day it is about helping people and giving back in every way possible," he said.

Under his leadership over the last four years, Sicangu Propane has experienced tremendous growth in sales, service offerings, and – most importantly to Eagle Deer – community trust.

"One of the things I'm most proud of is that last year (2020), we had 92% of the propane sales on the reservation. We've been able to accomplish that because of our reliable service and relationships with customers. People know that our team will go out in a blizzard to help them out."

As the business has grown, Eagle Deer and his team have constantly sought new ways to serve their customers. In recent years, they added a monitoring service that allows customers to check their propane levels from an app on their phone. "We can also monitor the tank levels on our end," said Eagle Deer. "There have been a few times when we've had below zero weather coming in, and we've been able to check who needs propane and actually go out and fill their tank without them ever having to call us."

In addition to their state-of-the-art monitoring technology, Sicangu Propane also provides customers with additional conveniences including the ability to track prices and place orders via text message, as well as programs that allow customers to lock in annual pricing. They have also expanded their staff to include certified technicians who can conduct repairs and install new tanks and propane lines. Finally, they have begun to offer regional recreational propane services, a business that has expanded rapidly in the past year.

According to Eagle Deer, it's not just their service that differentiates them from other companies, but also how they use their profits to benefit the community. In addition to hosting monthly giveaways, Sicangu Propane regularly makes donations to schools, groups that work with youth, and community events such as Rosebud Fair. They have also hosted community meals to honor elders and those in public service.

"I want people to know that when they buy from us, it's not just going into our pockets; it's creating jobs and being reinvested back into the community," added Eagle Deer. As is the case with all REDCO subsidiaries, 20% of Sicangu Propane's profits are given back to the Rosebud Sioux Tribe in an annual dividend that supports essential governmental services.

In the future, Eagle Deer – who holds degrees in Utilities Technology and Business – hopes to offer a scholarship that would support students who are attending technical or vocational school.

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## Sicangu Propane Delivery Schedule

**Hours:**

8am- 5pm Monday- Friday

**Recreation Tank**

**Refill hours:**

8am-5pm

311 West HWY 18  
Mission, SD 57555  
605-856-2035

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
Mission	Rosebud	White River	Mission	Mission
Antelope	Soldier Creek	Swift Bear	Antelope	Antelope
White Horse	Ironwood	Horse Creek	White Horse	White Horse
Two Strike	Ring Thunder	Butte Creek	Two Strike	Two Strike
St. Francis	Uppercut Meat	Okreek	St. Francis	St. Francis
Spring Creek	Parmelee	Winner	Spring Creek	Spring Creek
Grass Mt	HeDog	Ideal	Grass Mt	Grass Mt
	Blackpipe/Norris	Wood		

visit [www.sicangucorp.com/sicangu-propane](http://www.sicangucorp.com/sicangu-propane) to learn more about services offered by Sicangu Propane

## Buffalo Harvest to Provide Food for Immersion School

On October 21st, Wolakota Buffalo Range partnered with Wakanyeja Tokeyahci to provide a buffalo for harvest. Meat from this harvest will benefit the students at Wakanyeja Tokeyahci, who will now have the opportunity to eat meals served with locally harvested buffalo, the main source of nourishment for our Lakota ancestors. Wakanyeja Tokeyahci is hoping to create additional community partnerships so that their students have the opportunity to eat more farm-to-school meals during the school year.



## Food Sovereignty Initiative Hosts Final Farmer's Market of Season

On October 13th, the Food Sovereignty Initiative hosted their Fall Bash and final Farmer's Market of the season. In classic autumn fashion the weather was drizzly and cold, but that didn't stop the community from coming out and warming up with a hot cup of hot chocolate and hot food served by various vendors. Along with food, local artist vendors participated selling their art and hand-made items. Wopila to Karen Moore, Matthew Wilson, and Michelle Haukaas (pictured below) and all other members of the FSI team that made this market season happen and provided hundreds of pounds of locally grown produce for the oyate.



## Event Calendar

**November 6th, 2021**

*All-Nations Football Conference Championship  
USD Dakota Dome*

9B – 1:00 p.m.: Tiospa Zina vs McLaughlin

9A – 4:00 p.m.: Todd County vs Winnebago, NE

**November 25th, 2021**

*Tatanka Trot 2021*

in person, 9am at Todd County Middle School  
or virtual

For updates, follow:

[www.facebook.com/sicangucdc](https://www.facebook.com/sicangucdc)

[www.facebook.com/SicanguOyatekiIyanka](https://www.facebook.com/SicanguOyatekiIyanka)

## CEO Wizipan Little Elk Steps Down to Join Department of Interior Staff

After 10 years as REDCO's CEO, Wizipan Little Elk has accepted an appointment as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary at the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Wizi has been a tremendous asset not only to REDCO but to all of the Sicangu Lakota Oyate, and we cannot thank him enough for his hard work and leadership. REDCO Board Chair Wayne Boyd is the interim CEO, and the search for a permanent replacement will begin in November.



## Employee Spotlight:

*Sarah Hart*

*HR Director, REDCO*

*What is your favorite part of the work you do for REDCO?*

I get to work for my people. Building a tribal economy from the ground up is a challenging task. REDCO has taken the challenge on and is addressing the concerns that plague our reservation. I was raised to have a Lakota mindset of conducting myself in the best interest of our Oyate. It involves living by our values and doing things in a good way. We need to always keep in mind our past, present, and future generations.

*What values do you hold that you feel you are able to lean into with your work for REDCO?*

Our Lakota values are implemented in the work we do.

*What is something you'd like the oyate to know about the work you do?*

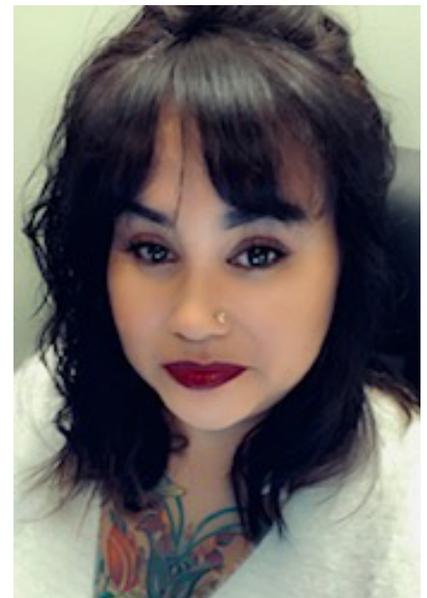
I want my people to know that I work hard for the betterment of them and our future generations. In our work, the Oyate and our way of life are kept in mind and come first.

*Who is a person in your life that has been most influential to you, and why?*

The person most influential in my life is my Unci Alice Four Horns, Stands By Him. She taught me how to respect myself and how to conduct myself according to our values. She instilled strength into having a Lakota mindset and heart.

*What is something you'd like to share with the young people of the oyate?*

Get a higher education. It will better your life and the life of your future generations. Always remember who you are and where you come from when you journey through life! Our ways will save you in more ways than one and every time you need it.



*Sicangu CDC*



*REDCO*



*Tatanka Funds*

