

# Wranglers round up horses, bison in park, Helicopters help lead animals to corrals

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Fryburg, N.D. (AP) Smooth, efficient, effective --but not nearly as much fun as the "old days." That's how wranglers describe Monday's roundup of wild horses at Theodore Roosevelt National Park. Clear skies and a bright October sun warmed the North Dakota Badlands as two helicopters headed out about 8 a.m. About 15 wranglers saddled up and headed to the top of a rise just south of the park's corral north of Fryburg. The wait was on. The silence was broken by the sounds of song birds and the whirl of helicopters in the distance. After nearly two hours, a voice over a radio said, "I hope the elk get out of the way." Then spectators saw a helicopter bob over the hilltop. Shortly afterward, horses could be seen galloping down the draw. They were led by a lone rider and trailed by the rest of the wranglers and two helicopters. By noon, a second trip had been made, and nearly 100 of the 109 horses in the park were in the corral. Wrangler Gary Tescher, 46, has been helping with the Theodore Roosevelt National Park horse roundups since he was in the eighth grade. "It sure has changed a lot," he said, as he calmed his horse when the helicopters took to the air for a second time. "It is not as much fun." Tescher said he did more riding before helicopters and radios were used. His uncle would go up in a plane and spot bands of horses before the wranglers headed out. "Sometimes, you'd sit on top of a knoll all day and never see any horses," Tescher said. It is the "rush" that keeps him coming back. When the horses smell the corrals and try to turn around, everyone goes everywhere, Tescher said. "It is a free for all," he said. Riders and horses take many risks during the frenzied chase. "It's suicidal," he said. "You just lose it. ... Your horse is a semi-control runaway. He's enjoying it as much as you are. "I feel privileged to be able to experience something like that," Bruce Kaye, a park spokesman, said 90 horses were rounded up Monday. Of those, about 35 will be auctioned off and three will go to Yellowstone National Park. On Tuesday afternoon, helicopters herded about 100 buffalo off a plateau in the park's north unit. Kaye said most of those chosen from the park herd will be given to the Three Affiliated Tribes. Five will go to the Jamestown buffalo museum and one bull will be sent

to the federal game preserve at Sully's Hill, near Devils Lake.</W></Primitive>  
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