

# Buddy Bison Goes to the Park

by

Rob Cohen

“Today, I’m taking you to the park!” Roy the Rancher said.

Buddy Bison’s eyes grew big. *A park!* he thought. Buddy Bison had seen pictures of all sorts of parks but he had never been to one. All he knew was the land around the ranch. Some small hills, some mud to roll in, a little fountain of water for him to drink from—but there were no other bison. There were just a few cows and chickens.

Roy walked Buddy Bison into the big, open trailer. As he snuggled into the warm hay, Buddy Bison began to imagine what kind of park he was going to. He pictured a tiny park in the nearby town with a bench and a few flowers and trees.

*A nice place to sit and watch people, he thought.*

Or maybe he would go to a bigger park with a swing and a climber. Buddy Bison pictured himself flying high in the swing.

Maybe he would go to a park that had a big baseball field.  
He imagined running around the bases.

*Home run for Buddy Bison! Yaaayyy!*

Perhaps Roy was taking him to a historic park to see a famous building like the Lincoln Memorial or the White House.

*Good morning, Mr. President!* Buddy Bison imagined saying.

But maybe he was going far away from the city to a park with a big lake and lots of hiking trails. He could take a long walk along the shoreline and enjoy watching the birds and bunnies.

There were also parks along the ocean, the bison knew. He thought about sliding down a sand dune and romping in the surf of the sea.

Or maybe he was going to a park along a wild river. Buddy Bison pictured himself riding a raft through the rapids.

*I hope I don't fall in!* he thought.

They drove for a long, long time. Buddy Bison fell asleep dreaming of all the possibilities.

When he awoke, Buddy Bison found himself in a strange landscape. Steep, rocky mountains—so much taller than the hills on the ranch—blocked the sky. Deep evergreen forests gave way to flat open fields with pillars of steam rising from the ground.

“Those are steam vents, Buddy Bison,” Roy said. “The steam comes from boiling water deep beneath the ground.”

They passed by a murky pond bubbling over with boiling mud.

“That’s called a mud pot,” Roy explained. Buddy Bison thought it smelled more like rotten eggs than mud.

*I don't think I'll roll around in that mud!*

Soon they arrived at a most spectacular sight. In a nearby field, a huge fountain of water shot high into the air.

“That’s Old Faithful!” Roy exclaimed. “It’s called a *geyser*. It erupts about every 45 minutes—day and night, all year long.”

*Now that’s a tall drinking fountain!* the bison thought.

Buddy Bison was amazed at this strange and wonderful place. There was so much to see at every turn in the road. But the biggest surprise was yet to come.

Roy pulled the trailer up to a wide open field. A broad, slow moving stream flowed in the distance. Roy let Buddy Bison out of the trailer.

“Look behind you!” Roy said.

Buddy Bison turned around and saw the most amazing sight of all. Hundreds of bison were grazing on the grassy plain that stretched out for miles and miles.

“Welcome to one of the biggest national parks in the country,” Roy the Rancher said.

A pair of bison walked up to greet Buddy Bison.

“Welcome to Yellowstone National Park!” Roy shouted.  
“Welcome home!”

### **About Buddy Bison® and National Park Trust**

Buddy Bison is the mascot of National Park Trust (NPT), the nation's only organization dedicated to the completion and full appreciation of the American system of national and state parks through the identification of key land acquisition needs. In addition, NPT's Buddy Bison School Program is designed to fulfill our vision that everyone will have an American park experience, especially those from underserved communities. For more information visit: [www.ParkTrust.org](http://www.ParkTrust.org).

### **About the Author**

Rob Cohen of Potomac, Maryland is the author of several original children's musicals which have been performed by elementary school students around the country. He has recently turned his creative efforts to writing picture books which capture the same spirit of youthful discovery, humor and imagination of his plays.