

# Buddy Bison: In Search of Volcanoes

Rob Cohen

SPLOOSH! The pot of tomato sauce boiled over, splattering hot red liquid everywhere. Buddy Bison watched wide-eyed through the kitchen window as Rancher Roy hurried to turn down the stove.

“Looks just like a volcano!” Rancher Roy shouted. “And it so happens, Buddy Bison, *that* is where our next trip will take us. In search of volcanoes.”

*I've heard about volcanoes!* Buddy Bison thought and laughed as he imagined a mountain top exploding with smoke and tomato sauce.  
*Awesome!*

We'll leave tomorrow," Roy said. "Our trip will take us through national parks in Arizona, California, Oregon and Washington." Roy unfolded a large map, showing his bison friend the route.

The next day, Rancher Roy drove Buddy Bison in his special trailer to Arizona. Buddy Bison looked through his binoculars at the mountainous landscape for any sign of a volcano.

“Here we are at Sunset Crater National Monument,” Roy announced. “Let’s go for a walk.”

Buddy Bison stepped off the trailer and quickly opened his big umbrella to protect him from the volcano.

“You won’t need that,” Roy chuckled. “This volcano hasn’t erupted in over 900 years.”

Buddy Bison gazed at the distant cone shaped, treeless mountain.

Roy continued, “That is called a cinder cone volcano. This black, rocky ground in front of you is actually lava from the last eruption.”

Buddy Bison jumped back.

“Not to worry,” Roy said. “The lava cooled off shortly after the eruption.”

Roy and Buddy Bison left Arizona for California. *Maybe I'll find an erupting volcano there*, Buddy Bison hoped.

The next day, they arrived at Lassen Volcanic National Park. Buddy Bison searched for fire in the sky, but what he saw was a tall, snow-capped mountain rising above the rocky ground.

“That’s Lassen Peak,” Roy said. “It last erupted in 1917, but it’s due for another eruption soon.”

Buddy Bison stepped cautiously out of the trailer and placed a large frying pan over his head.

“Not today, my friend,” Roy said. “You’re perfectly safe.”

They hiked to an area that had steam rising from the ground and boiling mud puddles.

“Those are all *thermal* features that are often a sign of volcanic activity. Just like Yellowstone Park, where we live.”

Buddy Bison’s eyes nearly popped out of his head. *I live in a volcano?*

“Yellowstone was formed by a huge volcano that last erupted over 600,000 years ago.” Rancher Roy explained. “It will erupt again.” The bison looked at his watch. “But don’t worry. There will be plenty of warning signs.”

Their next stop was in Oregon, at Crater Lake National Park.

Roy drove up and up the mountain until they came to a beautiful, deep blue lake surrounded by rocky peaks. At one end of the lake, Buddy Bison saw a smaller mountain surrounded by the water.

“This is Crater Lake, and that’s Wizard Island. That’s all that is left of what was Mount Mazama after the volcano erupted. Rainfall and snowmelt flooded the entire crater to create this lake.”

Buddy Bison put on his snorkeling mask and flippers.

“The lake won’t be rising any time soon,” Roy said. “The last eruption was 7,700 years ago!”

“Do you know that Crater Lake gets about 550 inches of snow every year? Roy asked. “That’s enough snow to almost bury a five-story building!”

Buddy Bison tried to picture a village where only a few rooftops and steeples would stick out above the snow.

The next morning, they arrived at Mount Saint Helens National Volcanic Monument, in the state of Washington. Buddy Bison saw a barren mountain in the distance. It looked like part of the top and side of the mountain had been cut off.

“Mount Saint Helens is one of the country’s most recently active volcanoes.” Roy explained. “It’s last major eruption was in 1980, but there have been small bursts of steam as recently as 2008.”

Buddy Bison put on his bright yellow raincoat and hat, just to be safe.

Roy went on, “The ground is being monitored all the time for any signs of another eruption. You’ll be safe today.”

“The volcano devastated all vegetation around the mountain after the 1980 eruption. But if you look closely, you can see young trees and wildflowers have sprouted up from the ash. Nature always finds a way to rebuild.”

As they drove away, Roy said “I know you would like to visit a volcano that you could completely experience, and I have just the place in mind.”

Buddy Bison again pictured mountains spewing ash and lava flowing down the sides, but now he wasn't so sure if he really wanted to get that close.

Roy pulled off the road at a sign that read, “*Home of the Volcano.*”  
“Here we are! Better put on your raincoat for protection. I’ll be right back.” Roy walked into the nearby building.

Buddy Bison quickly buckled up his raincoat not knowing what to expect. Moments later, Roy returned with a humongous bowl filled with a mountain of ice cream! Whipped cream covered the top like a snow-capped peak and chocolate and raspberry sauce flowed down the sides like lava.

“Here it is,” Roy shouted placing the treat in front of Buddy Bison, “the *Volcano!*”

Now *this is a volcano I can really get into!* Buddy Bison thought as he gobbled down the sweet ending to a perfect trip.

### **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.