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## AMERICAN PRAIRIE RESERVE NEWSLETTER APRIL 2008

### A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

We have been surprised and pleased with the increase of requests for information about the project's current status. Perfect timing for the new, soon to be available 30-minute film documentary, funded by Wallace Genetic Foundation, produced by Video Takes Inc. and narrated by Tom Brokaw, which provides a fresh look at our progress. We also hope you will enjoy perusing our new, continually expanding Self-Tour Guide which provides information on how you can experience the greater Reserve area by car, mountain bike and horseback as well as what to see and where to stay in the surrounding classic western towns of Malta, Zortman and Lewistown. Early spring can be a wonderful time to visit, but if it rains, mind the gumbo!

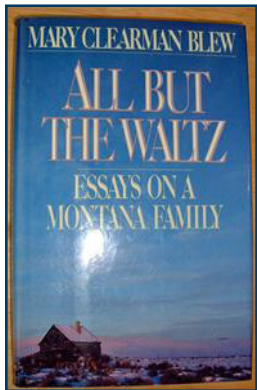


Amidst this winter's fascinating variety of wildlife projects, we are particularly enjoying staying abreast of WWF's efforts to learn more about the big cats who prowl the region's gullies and foothills. As for the growth of our organization, we could not be more pleased than to welcome both Dorothy Bradley and George Horse Capture Jr. to APF's National Council. I hope you have the pleasure of meeting them both soon.

Thank you very much for your continued support. Enjoy the updates!

Sean Gerrity

### WHAT WE'RE READING NOW - ALL BUT THE WALTZ by Mary Clearman Blew



Historians estimate that along with the abundant wildlife, human beings have occupied the northern Great Plains for at least 11,000 years. While describing only a tiny slice of that extensive human history, Mary Clearman Blew weaves a remarkable, authentic tale about 100 years of her family's challenging existence in the breaks and prairie landscape.

*"As Ms. Blew pieces together her family's hundred-year history in central Montana, she writes with sadness, fierce pride, and an unforgettable clarity of their struggle to survive drought, disaster, and economic depression. . . . In prose with a shining edge, she etches short, stunning vignettes of this bleak yet beautiful country."* - The New York Times Book Review

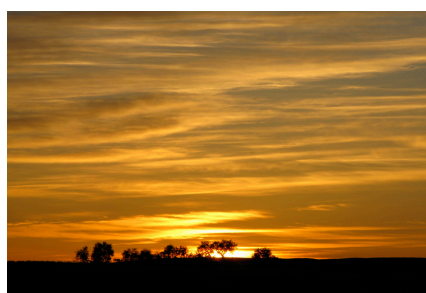
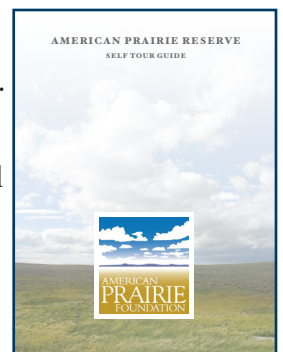
We think you will find All But the Waltz a worthwhile and thoroughly enjoyable addition to your spring reading list.

### APR SELF TOUR GUIDE - Now Available Online

We are pleased to announce publication of American Prairie Reserve's brand new Self Tour Guide. This auto tour provides you with a self-guided adventure through the American Prairie Reserve.

For those of you wanting to visit the Montana prairie in the near future, we hope this auto tour will make your visit to the area more enjoyable and your travels run smoothly. To download an electronic copy of our guide, visit our website at [americanprairie.org](http://americanprairie.org) or call us at (406) 585-4600 to request a copy by mail.

We hope to see you at the Reserve someday soon!



### BY THE NUMBERS

- 10** - pounds - daily meat consumed by a cougar
- 1** - month - age at which cougars develop teeth
- 67** - bison - current size of APF's bison herd
- 4** - number of chambers in an elk's stomach  
*(the first stores food, and the other three digest it)*

photos by Dennis Lingohr





## WORLD WILDLIFE FUND SCIENCE UPDATE - Cougars on the Prairie

WWF is partnering with the Gros Ventre, Assiniboine and Chippewa-Cree communities to learn how recolonizing cougars effect the ecology, residents and economies of the Fort Belknap and Rocky Boys Indian Reservations. Cougars are the only large carnivore successfully recolonizing the American Prairie Reserve (APR) region. The factors influencing the rate and geographic area of cougar expansion are unknown, as cougars have never been studied in a prairie/breaks and island mountain landscape. In recent years, cougars have been documented on the Charles M. Russell Wildlife Refuge near the APR (coincidentally near the first place that Lewis and Clark spotted a cougar on their route upriver in 1805). Large carnivores, such as cougars, are important to maintaining a balanced prairie ecosystem. Cougars prey on deer and elk and that predation ripples through the ecosystem. Additionally, cougars serve as an “umbrella” species, one that requires a large landscape to support a viable population. By obtaining information about the size and composition of the landscape needed to conserve cougars, scientists can also define their conservation priorities for many other species falling under the same umbrella.

The WWF research team is led by WWF Senior Fellow Dr. Kyran Kunkel, who is working with Rocky Boy biologist, Tim Vosburgh, and Ft. Belknap biologist, AJ Bigby. This winter the team fit five cougars with GPS radio collars, allowing the scientists to track the location of the animals every four hours in order to assess the cougars’ range, diet, survival and habitat use and monitor their proximity to livestock. The results of this collaborative study will guide future cougar repopulation management and conservation work in the APR region.



## APF NATIONAL COUNCIL UPDATE - Introducing Dorothy Bradley and George Horse Capture, Jr



Dorothy Bradley joins us after a long career as a Montana citizen legislator, lawyer and community leader. At the age of 23, she was elected as the only woman in the Montana House of Representatives. She served a total of eight terms. Dorothy was the Democratic nominee for Governor in 1992, narrowly losing the race by less than a percentage point. Since that time she briefly taught at a small rural school next to the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation, was the Director of the Montana University Water Center, and recently completed seven years as the District Court Administrator and staff for the Gallatin County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council. By joining the National Council,

Dorothy now lends her deep knowledge of Montana and its communities to APF’s efforts to create the American Prairie Reserve. Dorothy lives near White Sulphur Springs, MT.



George Horse Capture, Jr., is a member and leader of the Gros Ventre/White Clay people and lives in Hays, Montana on the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation. Father of seven and grandfather of two, George’s main interests are working with tribal youth, as well as with people of all different cultures and races. He especially wishes to positively affect the environment, including prairie restoration, and to reinstill hope in his tribe’s youth while improving the circumstances of his people. He is a founding member of the White Clay Society, Executive Director of the non-profit One Step Further and a member of the Hays School Board and the Gros Ventre Treaty Committee. His boundless curiosity,

infectious good humor and dedicated commitment to bettering his tribe’s place in today’s world, as well as to understanding and educating others about its historical and cultural roots, make George an invaluable asset as an APF National Council member.

*Coming in the next issue: APF welcomes Eric Schneider and Edward Schmults to the National Council*

## APF and YOU - New American Prairie Foundation Film Premiered in Washington DC

Thanks to the wonderful generosity of the Wallace Genetic Foundation and APF Board member Elizabeth Ruml, APF has a new half-hour film, titled *American Prairie Reserve*, to add to its educational toolbox! Superbly produced by VideoTakes, Inc., and narrated beautifully by Tom Brokaw, the film had its world premiere to rave reviews at the Environmental Film Festival in the Nation’s Capital hosted by American University on March 19, 2008. Over



150 people attended the two screenings, including such distinguished notables as former Secretary of the Interior, Bruce Babbitt. The film will be added to our website soon for your viewing pleasure, with copies available in early April. With luck, you may even see it on an upcoming PBS broadcast. Major kudos to all those involved in the funding and production of this fabulous and informative new film about the American Prairie Reserve!

*photos by Dennis Lingohr*



We thank you for your support! Please visit us on the web at [www.americanprairie.org](http://www.americanprairie.org).  
*The APF newsletter has been printed on 100% recycled paper.*



*Questions or comments? Contact Noël Twigg at (406) 922-0776 or [noel@americanprairie.org](mailto:noel@americanprairie.org)  
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