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# Theodore Roosevelt National Park News Release

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## Bison Injures Visitor in Theodore Roosevelt National Park

MEDORA, ND: A visitor was injured by a bison in the North Unit of Theodore Roosevelt National Park on Friday, June 30. Michael Turk, 65, from Juneau, Alaska was hiking on the Buckhorn Trail between 9:00 and 10:30 p.m. CDT to take photos of the sunset. He had encountered a bison on the way to his photo location and gave it a wide berth. He stopped to take additional photos of another bison he encountered while returning to Juniper Campground. Turk recalls that sometime while he was photographing the bison, it turned toward him and charged. He lost consciousness and sustained a large laceration on his left inner thigh in addition to other cuts and bruises.

Turk was able to hike to the trailhead, where he saw another bison. He climbed a short distance up a nearby butte and began calling for help. Hearing Turk's calls for help, seven campers arrived at the trailhead and found Turk about 50 yards away, with a bison between them. Unable to haze the bison away, one of the campers discharged a handgun into the ground, scaring the bison out of the area. The group helped Turk to the trailhead, dressed his wound, and drove him to meet emergency responders. McKenzie County Sheriff Department and park rangers met the group near the park entrance. McKenzie County Ambulance transported Turk to the hospital. He was treated at McKenzie County Hospital and later released.

Park staff would like to remind the public that bison are large, powerful and fast-moving. Though they may look docile, they are wild animals and may be startled by humans, especially after dark. Park regulations require that visitors stay at least 25 yards away from large animals such as bison, elk, deer, and horses. Visitors are also reminded while it is legal to carry a firearm under certain conditions, it is illegal to discharge one in a national park.

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