

Native Prairie Speaker Series

Title: Bison Restoration at Wanuskewin

Speaker: Katie Willie, Masters Candidate, University of Saskatchewan and Wanuskewin Heritage Park

Summary:

Katie's research focuses on the bison restoration project that has taken place at Wanuskewin. With ideas beginning in the late 1970s, the dream of returning of bison to the park was finally realized in December 2019. For her master's thesis, Katie is examining how bison restoration efforts have occurred across North America and taking an approach to it that connects the archeological significance of the sight - notably the extensive presence of Plains Bison bones - to the current restoration efforts. Culturally, ecologically, and practically, bison have an incredibly important role in the grasslands ecosystem and to the people of the Plains, and this relationship is being restored as we speak!

About the Speaker:

Katie Willie is a graduate student at the University of Saskatchewan studying under the supervision of Dr. Ernie Walker. After completing her B.Sc. in Archaeology at the University of Saskatchewan in June of 2018, she began working full time at Wanuskewin, where she had previously done field school and worked for a summer. Working at the park, Katie developed and delivered tours focused on archaeology and the prehistory of the Plains, which is when she knew that she wanted to further study Plains archaeology in her Master's. Katie has always loved the history of Saskatchewan, and have become very passionate about teaching the whole history, not just the past few hundred years, as there's so much more to the story! Outside of work and school, Katie is an artistic swimmer and have been involved with the local club for many years, coaching and swimming. Working at Wanuskewin has let her combine her love of teaching with her passion for archaeology and history into the perfect job!

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