



## Site 6

# Shadehill Buffalo Jump

FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS BEFORE THEY HAD HORSES and guns, Native Americans on the Northern Plains knew the secrets of the buffalo jump. This ancient hunting technique was well suited to the rugged, broken terrain. Grassy plateaus above steep, rocky cliffs often border rivers and creeks—as seen along both the North and South Grand rivers, which run together here into Shadehill Lake.

Buffalo herds frequently grazed these plateaus. A carefully managed stampede could drive them over the edge. Research shows that a Canadian buffalo jump—Head-Smashed-In, just north of the border, was used 5,700 years ago.

To view what remains of the Shadehill Buffalo Jump, step out and look left through the fence, across the bay to the steepest cliffs above the lake. Thick juniper trees fill the near draws and on the other side of the trees are drop-off cliffs. The slump below shows where bones were bulldozed off the

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*Stampeding buffalo over a cliff required detailed planning and a sizeable herd for the success of hunters without horses or guns. Courtesy of Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump World Heritage Site, Alberta, Canada Culture and Tourism.*