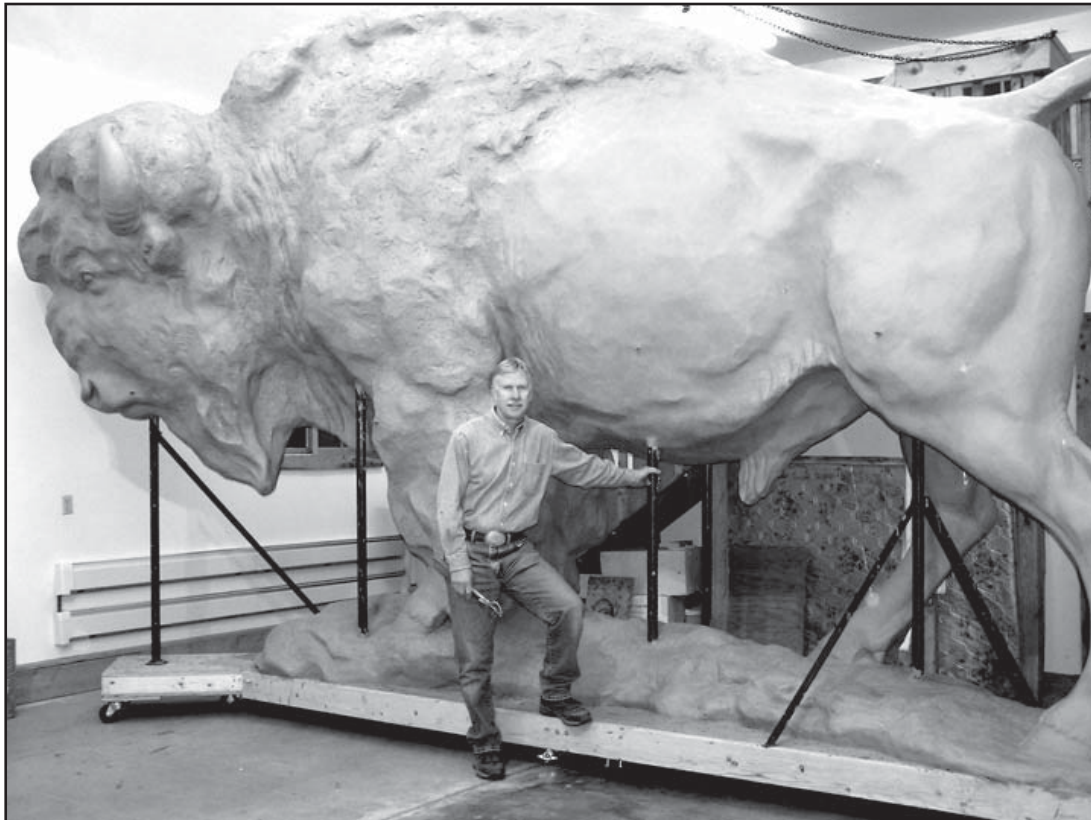


Valley News



Jim Gilmore is shown at work on a bison sculpture.

Art and stewardship unite for event

SOUTH FORK—Twenty-five prominent local and regional artists have accepted an invitation to participate in the 2nd annual “Keep the Rio Grande Grand - A Premier Art event” to be held August 15 at the South Fork Community Center. This art show and sale flavored with great food, fine wine and beer is sponsored by Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust (RiGHT) to raise funds and awareness for land conservation easements along the Upper Rio Grande and across the San Luis Valley.

Jim Gilmore, sculptor and conservationist, is the focus of this first of several articles to highlight participating artists. Gilmore’s roots run deep and wide into the ranch land just west of Alamosa where he has lived his entire life. As a child he observed wildlife when exploring the meadows, woods, and the river - studying anatomy, move-

ment and habits of animals. He continued this practice as he grew older, and although his family responsibilities lay with ranch and farm work, whenever he had time Gilmore would slip away to an old boxcar transformed into his first studio to work on leather, painting, and ultimately, sculpture, which as he says “... got out of hand.” Now twenty-five years after he “...had to get into the art business,” ten first-rate galleries throughout the west represent Gilmore’s work. He participates in major annual sculpture shows at Tulsa and Loveland as well. In Alamosa, the huge “Grizzly” of Adams State College was created by Jim to honor his parents who had held education in very high regard.

Recently the Gilmores placed the family ranch under a conservation easement, preserving the land forever in its current state

as a working ranch and wildlife corridor along the Rio Grande. As Jim Gilmore stated in a recent interview those attributes plus scenic beauty draw visitors and settlers to the San Luis Valley. He also expressed his views about bringing people together with similar values - artists and others who appreciate art and the land. The August 15 event provides a rare opportunity to visit with many well-known artists, to view and purchase works of great art - all in one place at one time - and as Jim Gilmore says, the evening is “... a fun way to support conservation.”

For more information about “Keep the Rio Grande Grand - A Premier Art Event” please go to the RiGHT website www.riograndelandtrust.org. The filmed interview with Jim Gilmore and those of other artists will be accessible at that site as they become available.