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## ***Newsletter and Blog***

Featuring updates on grizzly bear conservation activities,  
and the latest *Grizzly Times* Blog  
from [Louisa Willcox and David Mattson, PhD.](#)  
Co-Founders of *Grizzly Times*.  
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### ***Dear Friends of Grizzly Bears,***

Most grizzlies are asleep by now, except those scavenging gut piles left by big game hunters in the Jackson Hole Valley, and maybe a few elsewhere. (More on this below). This year, denning does not come soon enough, as bear deaths continue to rise, with 65 grizzlies reported dead in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem (GYE), and 51 known to be dead in the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem (NCDE).

This newsletter is a bit longer than usual, as there is also so much government deception that our newsletters must take on an additional fact-checking function.

### **NEW BLOG:**

This week I am shifting gears with my first of several articles on conservation icon Aldo Leopold. His writings made a huge impact on me and generations of conservationists, but his memory may be fading in some corners. I aim to put a spotlight on his contributions to conservation of the grizzly and the wild. I also plan to feature the inspiring lives of his children, especially Luna and Estella.

This article is dedicated to Escudilla, Arizona, the subject of one of Leopold's most famous essays about the shooting of the last grizzlies in Arizona - as a hopeful vision of the future, David photoshopped the bear into a picture we took last winter on Escudilla. Hope you enjoy!

### ***On Escudilla, the Leopold Clan, and the Big White Bear***

<https://www.grizzlytimes.org/single-post/2018/12/02/On-Escudilla-the-Leopold-Clan-and-the-Big-White-Bear>

(This Blog follows below.)

### **IN THE NEWS:**

**Of Delisting and Dissembling**

The Fish and Wildlife Service's next move on grizzly bear delisting is becoming clearer. In this article, FWS announced at least a one-year delay in delisting either GYE and NCDE grizzlies, in order to respond to Judge Christensen's relisting order. The agency is also considering delisting all populations at once, even the tiny populations that are on the brink of extinction. <http://www.powelltribune.com/stories/feds-grizzlies-likely-to-remain-listed-for-years,16793>

The article below illuminates the narratives that government agencies are using to promote delisting: Wyoming claims they are competent to manage bears (really?), and the trophy hunters say bears are getting too dangerous and thus more must be killed. <http://www.wyomingpublicmedia.org/post/why-grizzly-remains-tug-war-between-environmental-groups-and-local-management#stream/0>

The article below is a classic example of agency dissembling about the problem of bear mortalities in order to justify delisting. Cecily Costello of Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks said the record deaths in the NCDE are not a problem because the population is growing (not true according to their own data) - and several of the bears are not really dead, since they are in zoos. But in fact, they are officially "dead" to the ecosystem, and FWS counts them as such. <http://www.mtpr.org/post/51-grizzly-mortalities-deadliest-year-record-montana-bears>

### **Of Dispersing Bears, Increasing Conflicts**

A recent agency meeting on NCDE grizzlies highlighted the issue of dispersing bears. Instead of creating joy, the bears' expansion is "creating fits" for some ranchers and government officials. According to government data, population growth has stalled in both the GYE and NCDE, with bears expanding to compensate for fewer calories available in the core of both ecosystems - the consequence of climate change and wildfire. Despite these facts, the government story is: We have bears coming out our ears and thus need to strip protections and hunt them.

Government confusion over what to do about dispersing grizzlies is prompting some reactionary, dumb responses, such as relocating a bear in the Bitterroot Valley back to the NCDE despite the fact it was doing nothing worse than eating worms on a golf course. Also, in some areas the government's policies are schizophrenic, as for example allowing hunters to bait black bears (jelly donuts, rotten fruit, etc.) in areas with strict food storage rules for grizzlies. These articles illustrate these issues: <https://flatheadbeacon.com/2018/11/13/montana-grizzly-bears-roaming-far-afield/>  
[https://ravallirepublic.com/lifestyles/recreation/article\\_d34ecd44-498b-5617-a0e4-d09c8c76ebe5.html](https://ravallirepublic.com/lifestyles/recreation/article_d34ecd44-498b-5617-a0e4-d09c8c76ebe5.html)  
<https://flatheadbeacon.com/2018/11/25/grizzlies-roam-managers-look-reduce-conflicts-humans/>

One way that conflicts can be avoided during fall hyperphagia is to close big game hunting in certain areas frequented by grizzlies. As an example of what should be done, Grand Teton Park recently closed part of the Blacktail Butte to big game hunting, in part because grizzlies such as celebrity Mom 399 and her cubs were eating elk gut piles in the area. Nonetheless, grizzlies, which know all about gut piles, are quite vulnerable to lethal conflicts with hunters in large areas of the Park and nearby Elk Refuge, where hunting is still underway. [https://www.jhnewsandguide.com/jackson\\_hole\\_daily/local/article\\_4c24501e-c8d0-5166-94e5-f57f65646d28.html?fbclid=IwAR1Jy8C13YVA2buBW96zVC1I87CpflGCCnermk10euY4DrX3qUeHB9P3a0](https://www.jhnewsandguide.com/jackson_hole_daily/local/article_4c24501e-c8d0-5166-94e5-f57f65646d28.html?fbclid=IwAR1Jy8C13YVA2buBW96zVC1I87CpflGCCnermk10euY4DrX3qUeHB9P3a0)

### **Bear Spray Works**

Although investigations have not yet been completed, Wyofile reports that, according to Wyoming Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA), bear spray might have saved three lives earlier this fall. Instead, on September 14, hunting guide Mark Uptain was fatally mauled by a grizzly in the Teton Wilderness near Jackson, WY. Subsequently Wyoming Game and Fish killed two grizzlies.

OSHA reported that if bow hunting client, Corey Chubon, had had bear spray at the ready instead of in paniers, he might have saved Uptain from being killed. OSHA is demanding that outfitters examine and evaluate training policies related to bear spray use and operating procedures in bear country.

<https://www.wyofile.com/10mm-glock-fully-functional-in-fatal-grizzly-attack/>

### **Terror Entrepreneurs, Continued...**

We have written elsewhere about the problem of “Terror Entrepreneurs” inciting violence against bears. The term comes from David’s writings about the Early Modern Witch Craze, when innocent healers, mostly women, were killed in order that thugs could hold onto, and enhance, their power. The latest expression of the phenomena is occurring in the Yukon following the tragic death of a woman and infant from a bear attack. (The family were experienced trappers). As in the GYE, certain trophy hunters are using the deaths to press for aggressive hunting of grizzlies, instead of redoubled coexistence approaches. Hopefully, cooler heads and compassion will prevail, suggested in this:

<https://globalnews.ca/news/4714136/bush-life-city-safety-yukon-grizzly-attack/>

### **More Threats: Climate Change and Gold Mining**

The New York Times recently ran an amazing story on climate change threats to Yellowstone, with great quotes about the collapse of whitebark pine by our very own Dr. Jesse Logan. Way to go, Jesse! <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/11/15/climate/yellowstone-global-warming.html>

And, just as two gold mines were stopped in Montana’s Paradise Valley, north of Yellowstone Park, a new proposal is being pushed in the Centennial Mountains, a critical corridor for grizzlies and other wildlife. Thankfully, Idaho Conservation League and Greater Yellowstone Coalition have filed suit. [https://magicvalley.com/news/local/govt-and-politics/groups-file-lawsuit-to-stop-eastern-idaho-gold-exploration/article\\_f0a52136-9df0-5990-a414-2ffae85b644b.html](https://magicvalley.com/news/local/govt-and-politics/groups-file-lawsuit-to-stop-eastern-idaho-gold-exploration/article_f0a52136-9df0-5990-a414-2ffae85b644b.html)

### **Please Consider a Gift to *Grizzly Times* this Year!**

Grizzly Times needs your help! We’ve retired and are doing this full-time work pretty much gratis. If you were following the recent delisting court case, you know that David’s role was vital to the litigation success that restored grizzly bear protections to Yellowstone’s bears. Talented as they are, the attorneys could not have won the case without David’s scientific expertise. And, there will be continued demands on David’s time if this case is appealed to the 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court, and as the issue of delisting of NCDE grizzlies heats up.

During this holiday season, we hope you will consider a donation to our efforts. As we do not have a separate nonprofit, Conservation Congress, a tax-deductible organization, has agreed to be our fiscal sponsor. (Thank you, Denise!)

<https://www.conservationcongress-ca.org/give>

You can also sign up for a monthly donation through the Conservation Congress link – just be sure to note it is for Grizzly Times. Or, you can mail a donation for our work at:  
Conservation Congress

2234 Sierra Vista Circle  
Billings, MT 59105

***For the bears,***

***Louisa and David***