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Newsletter and Blog

Featuring updates on grizzly bear conservation activities,
and the latest *Grizzly Times* Blog
from *Louisa Willcox*
Executive Director of *Grizzly Times*.
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Hello Friends of Grizzly Bears,

As we enjoy an incredibly lush summer in the Northern Rockies, the grizzly bear conservation world is popping on multiple fronts – around Yellowstone, Glacier, the Cabinet Yaak and the North Cascades – and most of the news is not good. Here's a recap, that got longer than what I intended... I put in bold where you can help. Feel free to be in touch if you have questions.

Hunting Grizzlies in the Greater Yellowstone: Another Shoe Drops, but WY Barges Ahead

In Yellowstone, new information dug up by yours truly reveals that even according to Wyoming's own post delisting protocols, the state should not be allowing hunting of grizzlies this fall inside the bear's core distribution, known as the Demographic Monitoring Area (DMA). No response, of course, from the state, other than WY Governor Matt Mead formally approving the hunt last week. As many as 22 grizzlies could be killed by trophy hunters this fall in Wyoming. Overall, Wyoming explicitly plans to reduce, by killing and hunting, the number of grizzlies even in the DMA.

In the blog which follows this Newsletter, I discuss how delayed 2017 information on grizzly deaths in the Yellowstone ecosystem is being recklessly disregarded by the state of Wyoming, in relation to their intent to have a trophy hunt this fall.

<https://www.grizzlytimes.org/single-post/2018/06/13/New-Information-on-2017-Yellowstone-Grizzly-Bear-Deaths-Should-Nix-Trophy-Hunting-in-Core-Habitat>

Much depends on what happens during the hearing in front of Federal District Judge Dana Christensen on Aug. 30 – as WY intends to start hunting grizzlies outside the DMA on the first of September.

<https://www.grizzlytimes.org/single-post/2018/06/13/New-Information-on-2017-Yellowstone-Grizzly-Bear-Deaths-Should-Nix-Trophy-Hunting-in-Core-Habitat>

For a short, cool video by Bonfire Communication of the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission meeting on May 23 that approved the griz hunt (the first in 44 years), see this:

<https://www.facebook.com/GrizzlyTimes/videos/2027677407551616/>

For the scientific implications of the hunt, see:

<https://www.grizzlytimes.org/single-post/2018/06/13/New-Information-on-2017-Yellowstone-Grizzly-Bear-Deaths-Should-Nix-Trophy-Hunting-in-Core-Habitat>

Counting Methods Change for Yellowstone Grizzlies -- Probably Boosting Numbers that Can be Killed.

<https://www.wyofile.com/grizzly-census-makeover-proposal-sparks-conservation-worries/>

David will be writing more on this move soon, as the issue is complicated. Notice the comments by outgoing Yellowstone Superintendent Dan Wenk, whose ouster raises serious concerns.

And, here is more about the politics surrounding Superintendent Wenk:

<https://www.outsideonline.com/2319861/doi-strong-arming-national-park-leaders>

Grizzly Times Podcast Worth a Listen: with former MT Congressman Pat Williams

<https://www.grizzlytimes.org/the-grizzly-times-podcast>

In this interview, former Montana Congressman and friend, Pat Williams, shares fascinating insights from his career in politics and work to protect the environment – while demonstrating his chops as a terrific storyteller. Pat served nine terms (18 years) in Congress. Pat once remarked that he did not go to Congress as a conservationist, but he left as one. Pat sponsored legislation that designated the Lee Metcalf Wilderness north of Yellowstone Park and the Rattlesnake Wilderness north of Missoula, Montana. He led the successful legislative effort to save the Bob Marshall Wilderness from oil and gas development and helped ban geothermal energy drilling near Yellowstone National Park. Interesting comments at the end about state wildlife management too!

Delisting and Then Hunting Grizzlies in the Glacier Ecosystem

Controversy surrounding delisting and then hunting grizzly bears is also heating up around Glacier National Park in an area called the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem -- over the objections of the Tribes, conservationists and others. This ecosystem, termed by Dr. David Mattson the “Heart of the Grizzly Nation,” is key to recovery of other grizzlies in the Northern Rockies, even on the Canadian side of the border. A government-sponsored meeting last week makes clear the divides between pro-hunting ranchers and hunters, and anti-hunting conservation-oriented people, including the Tribes. Even the former US Fish and Wildlife Service Grizzly Bear Recovery Coordinator, Chris Servheen, thinks the process is moving too fast. Two new articles here:

https://missoulian.com/news/state-and-regional/rushed-strategy-could-backfire-grizzly-advocates-warn/article_99fc7766-eea5-59a5-a451-cb92148e9a8b.html

https://missoulian.com/news/state-and-regional/tribal-experts-caution-grizzly-recovery-plan-needs-time/article_b18f1f97-ab00-528a-b7f7-d7f3a4fcc46e.html

The Terrible Plight of the Yaak’s Grizzly Bears

With perhaps only 2-3 reproducing female grizzlies in Northwest Montana’s Yaak ecosystem, this tiny, isolated population is in dire straits. But it is still a vital population, and especially important to connect grizzlies between the lower-48 states and healthier populations north in Canada. But a new “hiking highway” would be disastrous, disturbing grizzlies in their last, best sanctuary by allowing thousands of hikers (many through-hikers with earbuds moving fast and accompanied by off-leash dogs) in a spur trail between the Pacific Crest Trail and Glacier.

More here, **plus how you can help:**

<https://www.facebook.com/GrizzlyTimes/posts/2030299573956066>

Ambushed on the Road to Recover Grizzlies in the North Cascades

Despite an overwhelming number of comments supporting grizzly bear recovery in the North Cascades that boasts ample good habitat for grizzlies (but now just a handful of grizzlies total), and support from Sec. of Interior Ryan Zinke, hostile Congressmen are defunding recovery efforts at the behest of local ranchers. **But you can help!**

<https://www.northcascadesgrizzly.org/tell-congress-to-give-grizzly-bears-hope/>

My Friend, Actress Margot Kidder: Sharing a Love of Dogs, the Wild, and Speaking Truth to Power

It may be a bit off-topic, but I thought some of you might enjoy... and yes, bears and the ancient bear dogs make their way in here. A dear friend who will be missed.

<https://www.grizzlytimes.org/single-post/2018/06/20/My-Friend-Margot-Kidder-Sharing-a-Love-of-Dogs-the-Wild-and-Speaking-Truth-to-Power>

Fun Fact Friday

David and I are starting a new series on Fridays about fun facts about how grizzlies make a living, and what they are likely foraging on right now in Yellowstone (and elsewhere in a number of cases).

<https://www.facebook.com/GrizzlyTimes/posts/2039522553033768>

What many do not appreciate is that Yellowstone grizzlies are unique from other grizzlies in many foods that they eat. Today we focus on pocket gophers (but mostly their root caches), which once provided a widespread grizzly bear food throughout the West. But because grizzlies were wiped out in about 97% of their former range, this behavior is unique now to Yellowstone.

David designed these to be like baseball cards: you can print them on the front and back. And create a collection over time...

For more on this and other grizzly bear foods, see these two links:

<https://www.grizzlytimes.org/unique-yellowstone-grizzlies>

<https://www.grizzlytimes.org/yellowstone-bears-are-unique>

For the bears,
Louisa