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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,

Happy New Year!

Even though the grizzlies are denned and safe for the time being, bear-related news continues apace as the 2019 begins...

NEW BLOG:

Of Friends, Science, Politics and Bears: There's Got to be a Better Way

This fascinating guest essay, by entomologist and forest researcher Dr. Jesse Logan, features his conversations with our friend and grizzly bear expert, Dr. Barrie Gilbert, who discusses the problem of the current delisting "litigation treadmill" – and sensible and practical ways forward. Hope you enjoy!

<https://www.grizzlytimes.org/single-post/2019/01/01/Of-Friends-Science-Politics-and-Bears-Theres-Got-to-be-a-Better-Way>

For more on Barrie, listen to my interview with him – the very first *Grizzly Times* podcast!

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

Also, my essay on hibernation got picked up by the Billings Gazette:

https://billingsgazette.com/opinion/columnists/guest-opinion-do-sleeping-bears-hold-secrets-for-human-health/article_d6f1aa25-d044-5d23-a3fb-576a9bd22319.html

IN THE NEWS:

▪ **The Latest on Delisting**

○ On December 21st, the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) filed an appeal of the rule that recently restored Endangered Species protections for Yellowstone region's grizzlies. The agency joined the states of Wyoming and Idaho, the NRA, Safari Club and other hunting groups that are also challenging the court's decision.

<https://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/422497-trump-appeals-court-ruling-that-restored-grizzly-bear-protections>

○ Delisting of the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem (NCDE) grizzly bear population is officially on hold pending the outcome of the appeals on Yellowstone delisting. But, Montana officials are paving the way for delisting by adopting new rules intended to demonstrate that they have an adequate system in place to manage grizzlies, if federal protections are removed. In this article, Montana officials say they will maintain a minimum of 800 grizzlies in the NCDE. How they will achieve that is a mystery, since they and other agency representatives have refused to protect and monitor habitat, and consider the newly codified Conservation Strategy to be a set of guidelines, rather than binding regulations.
<https://flatheadbeacon.com/2018/12/19/plan-place-future-grizzly-recovery-remains-uncertain/>

▪ **2018, Year of the Bear**

Here is an interesting piece in the *Missoulian* on top grizzly bear-related news during 2018, which it calls the “Year of the Bear:”

https://missoulian.com/news/local/year-of-the-grizzly-bears-roamed-the-news-in/article_4e1bf330-7a2e-5261-b5ed-ca6f7e423dcf.html

▪ **Challenge to Black Bear Baiting in Grizzly Habitat**

Recently, the Western Environmental Law Center filed a letter of intent to sue the FWS, which continues to allow hunters to bait black bears with glazed donuts and rotten fruit in grizzly bear habitat in Idaho and Wyoming – even though feeding bears or leaving out garbage is prohibited. Go, WELC!

https://www.jhnewsandguide.com/jackson_hole_daily/local/article_f3af2af1-f92d-53de-b82b-68fedf6cc723.html

▪ **Some Good News for Habitat**

Vital Ground has purchased 50 acres of critical habitat for grizzlies and other wildlife west of Missoula, near the confluence of the Clark Fork River and Ninemile Creek. Thank you!

<https://www.seeleylake.com/story/2019/01/03/opinion/protecting-a-bridge-to-the-bitterroots/4382.html>

▪ **Terror Entrepreneurs, Revisited**

We recently began regular updates on what David calls “Terror Entrepreneurs,” named after those who incited the burning of so-called witches during the Early Modern European Witch Craze as a way of consolidating their power. The term seems apt to describe what regressives are doing on the grizzly bear front.

○ Outgoing Park County, Wyoming, Commissioner Loren Grosskopf said that one of his greatest disappointments was the relisting of the Yellowstone grizzlies, with this: “In the long run, we’ll win. This may take a lifetime. To me, the only answer, and really it’s been the answer all along, is Congress needs to act. Just like they did with the (gray) wolves.”

What a revealing admission. Grizzlies are not a species to be cherished, merely controlled. At least with the Democratic-controlled House, legislative delisting has become more difficult.

http://www.codyenterprise.com/news/local/article_e8148140-0ecf-11e9-ab3e-0ba4650c27fa.html

○ Outfitters in British Columbia recently challenged the government’s ban on trophy hunting of grizzlies, citing economic impacts on the industry. The government banned hunting of

grizzlies a year ago after a sustained, high-profile campaign that showed overwhelming public opposition to the practice. Studies also show that bear viewing generates more economic benefit than does hunting.

<https://vancouver.sun.com/news/local-news/guide-outfitting-company-launches-class-action-suit-against-b-c-ban-on-grizzly-bear-hunt>

○ In recent weeks, grizzly bear experts in Canada have refuted claims that there is a “plague” of grizzly bears in the Yukon that contributed to the deaths of a mother and child last month. Outfitters have been using the fatalities to argue for killing more grizzlies. Scientists say that Yukon’s grizzly bear population is stable, and that slaughtering bears is not the answer. Grizzly bear expert Dr. Steve Herrero said, “If you want to try to hunt bears to the point that we are eliminating danger to people, you’d be in for a blitzkrieg, an orgy of killing that wouldn’t solve the problem but sure would create a lot of havoc.”

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/no-plague-of-grizzly-bears-yukon-1.4946701>

▪ **Trumping Endangered Species, Parks**

We can all breathe a sigh of relief that the Farm Bill, passed before the Christmas recess, did not gut the Endangered Species Act (ESA), or legislatively delist grizzlies. But, we are not out of the woods...

○ The Trump administration is finalizing new rules that will remove the backbone of the landmark law by allowing economics, rather than science, to dominate decisions. Here is a new report by the Endangered Species Coalition on Trump’s “Extinction Plan:”

<http://www.endangered.org/campaigns/annual-top-ten-report/extinction-plan/>

○ *New York Magazine* recently published this compelling, and disturbing, summary of Trump’s war on wildlife, which has been swamped by other news. Ex-Secretary Zinke’s deputy, David Bernhardt, a former oil and gas industry lobbyist, appears to be the architect of the department’s most sinister work. He seems the likely replacement for Zinke, who recently resigned amid multiple scandals and investigations.

<http://nymag.com/intelligencer/2018/12/trumps-war-on-wildlife-should-be-a-scandal.html>

○ National parks are suffering from the current government shutdown - trash is overflowing, and people are running amok in some places. Officials are calling the situation a “free for all.”

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/dec/31/national-parks-shutdown-impact-joshua-tree-yosemite-yellowstone>

Please Consider a Gift to *Grizzly Times*

We need your help! David and I have retired, and are doing this full-time work pretty much gratis.

As we enter - with hope - the new year, we ask you to consider a donation to our efforts.

If you were following the recent delisting court case, you know that David’s role was vital to the litigation success that restored protections to Yellowstone’s grizzly bears. The skilled attorneys could not have won the case without David’s scientific expertise. There will be continued demands on David’s time with the appeal of this case to the 9th Circuit Court, potential delisting of NCDE grizzlies, and mounting threats to the Cabinet-Yaak population.

As we do not have a nonprofit, *Conservation Congress*, a not-for-profit tax-deductible organization, has agreed to be our fiscal sponsor. (Thank you, Denise!)

You can make a one-time contribution or sign up for a monthly donation through the *Conservation Congress* link below.

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

Or, you can mail a donation to:

Conservation Congress
2234 Sierra Vista Circle
Billings, MT 59105

* Be sure to note that your contribution is for *Grizzly Times* (GT).

Thank you for your continued support - in any way - it is greatly appreciated!

***For the bears,
Louisa and David***