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NEWSLETTER

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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August 5, 2020

Dear Friends of the Grizzly,

As summer heats up, so does the rhetoric about grizzly attacks...

NEW BLOG:

“Man Attacks Grizzly” and Other Leading Bleeding Stories

By David Mattson

In his latest blog, David critiques recent sensationalized press coverage about human injuries caused by grizzlies that lacks a useful and realistic orientation to both grizzly bears and the risks of recreating and living among them.

David summarizes findings from his recent report, [“Effects of Pedestrians on Grizzly Bears,”](#) which includes an exhaustive analysis of the risks posed to people on foot by grizzly bears. He reviews the near-universal features of close encounters with grizzly bears that lead to aggression, concluding that you are safer in grizzly bear habitat than you are crossing the street.

Examining this year’s human injuries, he observes “what we seem to have had is a series of incidents where the involved people were, by all reasonable standards, actually attacking the involved bear. The victims were out minding

their own business trying to make a living, trying to take a nap, or trying to insure their offspring survived cub-hood, only to be attacked out of the blue by a human.”

The upshot of such coverage, he concludes, “is that people end up with an increasingly distorted view of grizzly bears and of the risks of living with them. And, God knows, we don’t need more distortions of reality these days, nor do we need more journalists stoking people’s fear. What we do need is more evidence-based contextualized journalism that actually helps people navigate a complex world—a world that requires we become more rather than less tolerant of those who are different, or simply of a different and less semiotic species. A world that requires we look at ourselves, our choices, and our behaviors rather than demonizing whomever or whatever is handy to the purpose.”

To view Blog, click on image below:



IN THE NEWS:

Delisting on the Backburner, Says US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)

The US Fish and Wildlife Service's Grizzly Bear Recovery Coordinator, Hilary Cooley, says the government is not rushing to delist the Yellowstone region’s grizzlies as it moves to comply with a court order requiring a long delayed five year review of the status of all grizzlies in the Lower 48.

The last grizzly bear five year review was completed in 2011. The tardiness was grounds for a lawsuit brought by the Center for Biological Diversity that compelled the agency to commit to the March 2021 deadline.

For nearly three decades, FWS has basically managed the grizzly by court order, losing case after case brought by conservationists. This includes two court rulings that restored endangered species protections for the Yellowstone

grizzly. The agency has repeatedly buckled to political pressures from ideologues, as well as energy, agriculture, and other development interests, while throwing caution and science to the wind. Hardly a way to manage a threatened species, let alone the iconic grizzly.

We would hope that FWS takes a long overdue deep breath and considers what is best for the grizzly bears and the multitudes who care about them – a tall order in these fraught times.

https://www.jhnewsandguide.com/news/environmental/grizzly-delisting-effort-on-the-backburner/article_dfa03c3a-14c7-5dcb-ab3e-37883e293e03.html

Montana Grizzly Bear Advisory Council Nears Finish Line

The 18-member Montana Grizzly Bear Advisory Council (GBAC) is nearing the end of its year-long effort to devise a set of recommendations for managing grizzlies in Montana. Dominated by ranchers, hunters and other interests, the council aims to have final recommendations to Governor Steve Bullock soon.

Although there are a number of common-sense recommendations in a draft version sent out by the GBAC for public review, the document falls short of what's not only needed but also possible to promote meaningful recovery of grizzly bears in Montana. This result is not surprising given that the GBAC was created by the state of Montana to provide cover for removing ESA protections and instituting a grizzly bear trophy hunt.

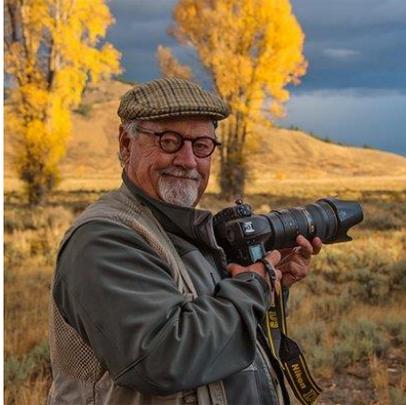
https://missoulian.com/news/local/grizzly-council-struggles-toward-final-recommendations/article_bdc16ba8-4094-5036-b01d-5c200a5de29d.html

Great Piece on Grizzly Bear Deaths

A compelling and thorough piece by Johnathan Hettinger of Montana Free Press on the recent spate of grizzly bear deaths in Montana and Wyoming features personal stories by wildlife photographers Brad Orsted and Tom Mangelsen. Hettinger notes that grizzly bears have been dying in record numbers in recent years, the result of increased collisions with vehicles, encounters with big game hunters, and conflicts over livestock and garbage. In four of the past five years, an unsustainable number of bears have been killed, almost wholly as a result of human causes.

In fact, according to federal data, more than 300 bears have died during the past five years. By comparison, during the preceding 10-years only 269 bears were killed in the same area.

<https://montanafreepress.org/2020/07/15/recovered-to-death/>



Tom Mangelsen and Brad Orsted

Conservationists, Scientists Furious Over Interior's Rejection of North Cascades Grizzly Plan



North Cascades National Park

Advocates and researchers are furious at the Trump administration's decision to terminate a plan to restore grizzly bears to the North Cascades in Washington state, claiming that its rationale flies in the face of science and public sentiment.

Chase Gunnell of Conservation Northwest that advocates for recovery of the North Cascades grizzly, said: "For the Trump administration to put the ice on this...and then blatantly lie in their statement that there was not public support...and to do it under the cover of a global pandemic and social unrest with little notice to even agency scientists who've been leading the process, let alone conservationists like myself, it was really a punch in the gut."

Dr. Chris Servheen, who served as the FWS's grizzly bear recovery coordinator for 35 years, offered this: "The decision made by the Secretary of Interior is pure politics and is wrong." True enough – but plenty of the FWS's previous decision, including repeated attempts to delist Yellowstone's grizzly bears, were purely political as well.

Meanwhile, Center for Biological Diversity recently filed a lawsuit against the Department of Interior for failing to release public records on its decision to end the North Cascades recovery program.

- <https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2020/jul/21/rejection-of-grizzly-plan-wont-deter-bear-advocate/>
- https://www.postregister.com/farmandranch/idaho/environmental-group-sues-feds-over-grizzly-bear-decision/article_5d490a9a-e171-51f8-a8df-f3f03076768f.html

Trump Proposes Another Blow to the Endangered Species Act

Last week, the Trump administration proposed another blow to imperiled species by [issuing a new definition of "critical habitat"](#) under the Endangered Species Act. The new regulation will limit what areas can be protected as critical habitat by narrowing this key definition under the law – making it easier to drill, frack, mine, clearcut, and otherwise exploit lands and waters that endangered wildlife rely on.

- <https://earthjustice.org/news/press/2020/trump-administration-proposes-another-blow-to-the-endangered-species-act>
- <https://www.nationalparkstraveler.org/2020/07/trump-administrations-proposed-changes-endangered-species-act-draw-criticism>

In case you have not been able to keep up with the breathtaking Trump rollbacks of environmental laws – 100 of them so far – here is a good, albeit staggeringly depressing summary:

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/climate/trump-environment-rollbacks.html>

GOOD NEWS & FUN STORIES:

"Bear Butter": Students Study Army Cutworm Moths in Glacier



A diverse team of international scientists led by a Washington State University graduate student are trekking the high peaks of Glacier National Park this summer to better understand a tiny but important food source for grizzly bears – the army cutworm moth. Students are collecting data that will be used to map and model alpine habitats where grizzlies forage during late summer months on thousands of moths hiding in alpine rock slopes.

During high summer, adult moths migrate from cropland into high mountain areas where they feed on alpine wildflowers at night, and nestle in crevices on high, rocky talus slopes by day. Right now, hungry bears are excavating thousands of moths every day.

Student Erik Peterson says: “I think of them as ‘bear butter.... By August, the moths are about 70 percent body fat, among the fattiest known species.”

Relatively little is known about Glacier’s alpine habitats that draw these moths. <https://news.wsu.edu/2020/07/20/bear-butter-scientists-study-tiny-moths-rich-food-source-grizzlies/?>

For more on army cutworm moths by David Mattson see this online resource: <https://www.mostlynaturalgrizzlies.org/army-cutworm-moths>

British Columbia Restricts Huckleberry Harvest to Benefit Bears



British Columbia authorities are restricting commercial harvesting of wild huckleberries in the Kootenay region in southeast portions of the Province for a third year to protect huckleberry bushes and preserve a critical food supply for grizzly bears. Professional pickers will be [banned from areas](#) identified as critical for grizzly bears and other species.

The recent increase in commercial-scale huckleberry harvesting in the Kootenays has resulted in conflicts with grizzly bears, over-exploitation of berries in critical areas and damage to huckleberry bushes, especially when mechanical harvesting devices are used.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/huckleberry-harvest-restrictions-1.5649691>

Bob Aland: Defense Attorney for the Bears



Bob Aland removes fence to benefit wildlife in Jackson Hole

For years tax attorney Bob Aland has vacationed in Jackson Hole, but nonetheless finding time to do what he can to protect grizzlies. He is one of the attorneys who helped win the recent case that restored endangered species protections for the Yellowstone region's grizzly bears.

In a delightful story by Todd Wilkinson, Bob says: "I believe trophy hunting is particularly disgusting. It is not a sport. A true sport involves two or more competitors, equally equipped, playing by the same rules – let the best competitor win. Sneaking up on an unsuspecting animal with a powerful weapon and killing it for fun, profit or personal validation is not a sport. This brings me to grizzly bears in the Lower 48, which were nearly exterminated by the time they were given protection in 1975 under the Endangered Species Act."

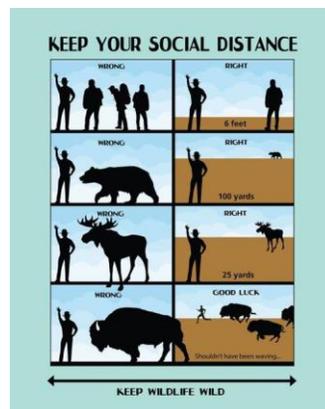
<https://mountainjournal.org/chicago-attorney-becomes-grizzly-advocate-in-his-home-away-from-home>

Yellowstone's New Funny Graphic about Staying Safe Around Wildlife

Yellowstone National Park asks tourists to maintain a safe distance from other tourists and – as always – potentially dangerous animals.

A new clever graphic is intended to drive the message home. This comes in the aftermath of a late-June incident involving a 72-year-old woman who was gored after violating park rules and repeatedly approaching to within 10 feet of a bison.

<https://ftw.usatoday.com/2020/07/yellowstone-tries-humor-to-teach-safe-distancing-behavior-bison-travel>



COOL VIDEOS:

A grizzly bear gives bear-resistant trash can CPR at West Yellowstone Grizzly Bear Discovery Center: <https://www.tnz.com/2020/05/16/grizzly-bear-gives-trash-can-cpr-tiktok-video/>



A surprised hiker captures a grizzly chasing two mountain goats in Glacier: <https://cowboystatedaily.com/2020/07/27/surprised-hiker-captures-video-of-grizzly-barreling-down-on-two-mountain-goats/>

An Alberta photographer films photogenic grizzly family in Yellowhead, Alberta: <https://www.yahoo.com/entertainment/bear-family-come-close-photo-051539616.html>

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 – despite the gradual dissolution of our physical bodies!

If you were following the delisting court case, you know that David's role has been vital to the litigation success that restored Endangered Species Act protections to Greater Yellowstone's grizzly bears. The skilled attorneys could not have won the case without David's scientific expertise. He also recently helped with the successful appeal to the Ninth Circuit Court, which has implications for delisting of Northern Continental Divide or even all Lower 48 grizzlies.

As we do not have our own nonprofit, a not-for-profit tax-deductible organization, *Conservation Congress*, 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 this link:

[Donate](#)

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***