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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 Grizzlies,

NEW PODCAST AND BLOG:

Of Estella Leopold and a “Fierce Green Fire” for the Earth

By Louisa Willcox

This week, I am thrilled to launch the first of a four-part podcast featuring Estella Leopold, daughter of conservationist, writer and philosopher Aldo Leopold. In the next few weeks, as the new episodes come out, I will be blogging on the relevance of the Leopolds' immense contributions to today's challenges. (See Blog below.)

(Thanks to David as always for encouraging me in my exploration and laser-sharp editing.)

Last summer I traveled to Seattle for a conversation about her amazing life and adventures. At 92 years of age, and still frequenting her lab at the University of Washington's Quaternary Research Center, Estella burns with passion for the natural world. At this critical time in our history, her perspectives are especially valuable for wildlife, wilderness and our planet. I hope you enjoy!

An excerpt here:

“...I expected to hear about Estella's scientific endeavors but, in addition, was astonished to learn the depth of her mastery of environmental campaigning... Summarized in a fascinating book coauthored with Herbert Meyer, *Saved in Time: The Fight to Establish Fossil Beds National Monument, Colorado* vividly describes a campaign to save a world-class paleontological treasure that was a virtual Rosetta Stone of ancient fossils...all near perfectly preserved in wafer-thin shales. She and her compadres did it all: top notch media work; effective grassroots organizing; political lobbying; public protest featuring ladies in pearls and high heels in front of bulldozers; and litigation that pioneered many environmental lawsuits to follow. Plus, the book reads like a thriller.

"I still laugh out-loud hearing her tell about their attorney, Victor Yannacone...who as she recalls: 'said we needed to just sue the bastards.' She shrugged and laughed. But they did – and won."

Listen to the **podcast**, and you will hear the voice of a maestro, often laughing at the little details – which is where the magic happens. You will also hear stories of her father, her family and her fascinating career.

<https://www.grizzlytimes.org/single-post/2019/03/26/Of-Estella-Leopold-and-a-Fierce-Green-Fire-for-the-Earth>

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

IN THE NEWS:

- **“Governors Roundtable” Uses Old Playbook to Accelerate Another Delisting**

Using a 20 year-old playbook, Montana Governor Steve Bullock recently announced a “Governors’ Roundtable” (GR) to expedite another delisting of Yellowstone area’s grizzlies. Wyoming Governor Mark Gordon quickly responded by announcing a tri-state grizzly bear “Summit,” also to advance state management of grizzlies, which were put back under US Fish & Wildlife Service control last fall by a federal court order. Bullock has opened an application process until April 12 for those interested in participating in a Montana grizzly bear advisory group, which will inevitably cater to the interests of hunters and ranchers. Meanwhile, Gordon has been talking with Wyoming Senator John Barrasso about steps to weaken the Endangered Species Act in order to promote the interests of corporate energy executives.

<https://billingsgazette.com/wyoming-governor-wants-a-summit-with-nearby-states-on-grizzly>

http://fwp.mt.gov/news/newsReleases/headlines/nr_4349.html

I have written a memo reflecting on my previous experience with a similar roundtable process; please ask me if you want to see it. Although the current Governor’s Roundtable cannot be ignored, we should not be deluded into thinking it is anything other than a ruse for distracting bear advocates, and advancing the interests of ranchers and trophy hunters.

- **Delays in Federal Appeal of 2018 Ruling to Relist Yellowstone Grizzlies**

The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals has granted the federal government an extension until May 24 for filing briefs associated with their appeal of the 2018 federal district court order that restored endangered species protections for Yellowstone grizzlies. Simply put, this means that the Department of Justice has not yet gotten its “ducks in a row.” The states of Wyoming and Idaho have also appealed the ruling, as have the NRA and Safari Club. The appeals process is likely to take at least two years. Meanwhile, the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) is considering a proposal to delist all threatened grizzlies in the Lower 48.

<https://missoulian.com/appeal-delayed-on-ruling-that-banned-removal-of-endangered-species>

- **Fish and Wildlife Service, Wyoming Egg on Terror Entrepreneurs**

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. Incredibly, the latest expression of this venal impulse came from FWS, the agency that is supposed to protect the grizzly.

A recent meeting sponsored by the Western Bear Foundation – a group funded by well-healed Safari Club members – bore the misleading title of “Can We Bear the Bias?” This quote from Hilary Cooley, FWS Grizzly Bear Recovery Coordinator, came from a follow-up piece by Wyoming Public Media: “The biggest threat to preserving grizzly bears on the landscape is

keeping and gaining support from the public...it's been frustrating, especially for people who have been living in grizzly habitat and have seen the populations grow. People take matters into their own hands. It's really easy to do and they are doing it.' Cooley did not elaborate on what that means, but it's clear local support for protecting the bear seems to be waning."

Translation: the FWS condones a handful of criminals inclined to break the law to vent their frustrations with bears and the federal government, while ignoring the Endangered Species Act, the rule of law generally, and the broader public interest. This is like saying: "we need to deport Muslims so white nationalists don't feel inspired to shoot them."

These are the bears' protectors?

<https://www.wyomingpublicmedia.org/post/public-event-highlights-need-local-support-grizzly-bears#stream/0>

Of course, Wyoming will not be outdone by the federal government in this regard. At a recent meeting of the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission (WGF), Dan Thompson, large carnivore program coordinator for the WGF remarked that: "following Judge Christensen's ruling, quite honestly, there's a different level of tolerance with the general public." And Brian Debolt of WGF offered this: "While environmental groups, tribes and thousands of people across the nation were in an uproar over the possibility of grizzly hunts near Yellowstone National Park borders, Park County residents are increasingly growing weary of conflicts as the footprint of areas inhabited by grizzlies continues to grow. The total number of conflicts by all predators are driven by grizzly bears

Subtext? "The public" consists of a few local thugs, willing to illegally kill grizzlies, who therefore need to be placated in federal and state management of bears. It's much the same message we hear from the Trump Administration about all manner of troublesome issues. No wonder grizzlies in Wyoming are dying in droves!

<http://www.powelltribune.com/stories/deadly-year-for-grizzlies-wolves,18253>

▪ **New Scientific Paper Underscores Cascading Effects of Lake Trout on Grizzlies, Other Species**

A new paper in *Science Advances* by a slew of prominent authors underscores the many adverse, cascading impacts of the nonnative Lake trout, which were illegally introduced into Yellowstone Lake several decades ago. Until the predatory Lake trout functionally extirpated Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout, these native fish had been a mainstay in the diet of Yellowstone grizzlies. In response, grizzlies shifted to eating more elk calves, not, despite federal claims to the contrary, mushrooms and dandelions – proving yet again that everything in an ecosystem is connected, and that not all bear foods are equal. Fish and meat give a bigger boost than salad, notwithstanding platitudes served up by bear managers.

SOME GOOD NEWS:

▪ **Court Halts Two Logging Projects in Grizzly Bear Habitat on the Flathead**

The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals recently granted injunctions that put a temporary hold on two logging projects proposed for the Flathead National Forest in key habitat for grizzlies, wolverine and lynx. The court has yet to rule on the merits of the case. Many thanks to Friends of the Wild Swan, Swan View Coalition, Native Ecosystems Council, and the Alliance for the Wild Rockies!

https://www.dailyinterlake.com/local_news/20190320/court_puts_temporary_hold_on_two_flat_head_forest_timmer_projects

▪ **Camera Traps Reveal Grizzly, Black and Polar Bears in the Same Place in the Arctic!**

Camera traps installed by University of Saskatchewan researcher Doug Clark caught grizzly, black and polar bears in the same camp in the Canadian arctic. Although neither black nor grizzly bears were entirely new to the area, these snapshots were the first tangible evidence that polar bears are not the only bear species to call this place home. “Many conservationists don’t look positively on the idea of environmental changes, especially when it affects high-profile species, like the polar bear,” Clark said. “Grizzlies are the new kids on the block...so, it poses the question, is this change good or bad? And, are we valuing polar bears more than grizzlies?”

Clark hopes to further integrate data collected from camera traps with the knowledge of local people in northern indigenous communities, as has been done elsewhere in Canada. “You can combine the robustness of the cameras with the ingenuity and knowledge that the local people have about the land that they live on,” he said. “This also gives them a way to gain a voice and some real traction in these debates about bear conservation, that really do affect them a great deal.”

<https://thenarwhal.ca/camera-traps-document-polar-grizzly-and-black-bears-in-same-arctic-camp/>

For an entertaining essay by Doug published by *Grizzly Times*, see:

<https://www.grizzlytimes.org/single-post/2018/11/02/The-Grizzlies-of-Wapusk-an-Unfolding-Story-of-Change>

If you want to help Doug with this important research, contact him at: d.clark@usask.ca

▪ **Rise and Shine, Grizzly Bears!**

This delightful piece by author, hunter, and passionate conservationist David Stalling will make you smile! Also check out his other writings on *From the Wild Side: Wild Thoughts from an Untamed Heart*.

<http://thoughtsfromthewildside.blogspot.com/2019/03/the-awakening-letter-to-bears.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.

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 region’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 or even all Lower 48 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***