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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 BLOG: *Grizzly Sardine Can Blues Reprise***

By David Mattson

This week, David takes on the monotonous and wrong-headed refrain of Interagency Grizzly Bear Study Team Leader Frank van Manen that the “ecosystem is full,” and “can’t hold any more bears,” repeated again at the April 18 grizzly bear managers meeting. Van Manen’s tired quip that “we are packing more sardines in the sardine can” deserves examination. David here provides the definitive rebuttal to this unsubstantiated claim that is simply a ruse to promote delisting. Scientists in the IGBST should be ashamed of themselves, and the public certainly deserves better.

David concludes with this thought: “We can have more grizzly bears in the Yellowstone ecosystem—and beyond. And we should have.”

(The Blog follows below.)

<https://www.grizzlytimes.org/single-post/2019/04/26/Grizzly-Sardine-Can-Blues-Reprise>

### **IN THE NEWS:**

#### **Grand Teton Grizzly Matron 399 Is Up!**

Grizzly 399 is up and about! At 23, she is ancient in bear years. She is famous for tolerating people and for teaching her cubs how to live amicably near roads and developed areas. She settled into these human-impacted environments primarily to keep her cubs safe from aggressive boars that often prefer to hang out in more remote areas.

Still, living near roads is dangerous business for a grizzly. Grizzly 399 is near the end of her life and perhaps her genetic line. Grizzly 610, her only daughter known to have successfully raised offspring, was not seen last year and is perhaps dead, as are at least 8 other cubs of 399. For all that 399 has proven to be a great mom, she may in the end not replace herself in the population. The story of her family reminds us of our power of life and death over grizzlies—and the planet.

[https://www.jhnewsandguide.com/jackson\\_hole\\_daily/local](https://www.jhnewsandguide.com/jackson_hole_daily/local)

### **Wyoming Comes to Their Senses on Grizzly Bear Trophy Hunt**

Wyoming Game and Fish Commission finally came to their senses on its proposed grizzly bear hunt in the wake of a federal court ruling last fall that restored endangered species protections for the Yellowstone region's grizzlies. At a recent commission meeting, the commission realized that anyone who hunted a grizzly could be prosecuted by the federal government, and thus held off on the hunt. The hunt had become a cause célèbre for politicians in the Equality State, including the state legislature and Wyoming Governor Mark Gordon.

As a reminder of who the commission listens to, the agency committed \$1.25 million to develop highway crossings that benefit wildlife—but only after being egged on by and partly financed by hunting groups such as Wyoming Wildlife Federation and the Muley Fanatic Foundation.

<http://jacksonholeradio.com/2019/04/game-and-fish-commit-to-wildlife-crossings/>

### **Tom Miner Basin: As Grizzlies Proliferate in Montana, Tourists Follow**

This article linked immediately below highlights the great work being done by many of the ranchers in Tom Miner to promote coexistence with grizzlies. But with more and more people visiting the area to see bears, the chances of mishaps are mounting.

Oddly, the piece fails to mention the seriousness of the problems on the periphery of these ranchlands, including conflicts with hunters on nearby National Forest lands, food conditioning of bears on nearby properties, and the intolerance of some locals.

It has become increasingly clear that the beloved "orphan twins of Tom Miner," whose mother had been shot by a hunter but nonetheless survived for 3 years, were killed by state managers last fall. The Tom Miner ranchers had really looked out for these young bears, who frequented the ranches and roadsides. Although the details of their deaths are still sketchy, it appears that they had become conditioned to human foods by people in the surrounding area. I am still trying to get more information on what actually happened here. The aura of secrecy around their deaths perpetuated by Montana's wildlife managers is deeply disconcerting.

This tragedy points to the need for a broader landscape-level approach to coexistence, building on the great work of the Tom Miner ranchers.

<https://www.hcn.org/articles/bears-as-grizzly-bears-proliferate-in-montana-tourists-follow>

### **The Killing Season Has Begun**

Grizzlies have been up for less than a month and already some have been offed. Two grizzlies involved in cattle depredations have been killed by managers near Cody in Wyoming. Also, two grizzlies have been killed in the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem. The government is investigating the death of a grizzly by a landowner near Augusta on the Rocky Mountain Front. The other grizzly, that had been involved in numerous cattle conflicts, was killed by a state manager near Helmsville.

Jamie Jonkel of Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks noted that the fires of 2017 contributed to the spike of conflicts in 2018, and expects a similarly busy conflict season this year.

- [https://www.kpvi.com/news/regional\\_news/after-busy-grizzly-managers-brace-for-more-work](https://www.kpvi.com/news/regional_news/after-busy-grizzly-managers-brace-for-more-work)
- <https://www.drovers.com/article/montana-grizzly-bear-euthanized-after-killing-cattle>
- <https://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/rocky-mountain-front-grizzly-bear-shot-by-augusta-landowner>

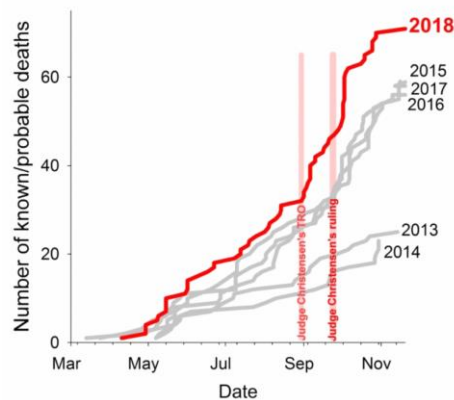
- <https://www.mtpr.org/post/fwp-reports-increase-northwest-montana-bear-management-actions>
- <https://www.usgs.gov/data-tools/2019-known-and-probable-grizzly-bear-mortalities-greater-yellowstone-ecosystem>

### Corrected Tally of Grizzly Bear Deaths for 2018: A Record-Shattering 71 Grizzlies Dead!

The Interagency Grizzly Bear Study Team's tally of grizzly bear deaths for 2018 has been updated to a total of 71 mortalities in this year alone. If you apply the federal formula estimating unreported/unknown mortalities, the total dead is near 105 grizzlies, or a shocking 15% of the total population of roughly 718 grizzlies. Needless-to-say, this death rate is totally unsustainable.

The leading causes of death are encounters and conflicts with big game hunters and livestock-related conflicts. I have been digging into detailed reports on individual mortalities. They clearly suggest that the sharp increase in deaths after Judge Christensen's restoration of ESA protections last fall was largely driven by revenge-killing, especially in Wyoming involving not only private individuals, but also, potentially, state wildlife managers.

- <https://www.usgs.gov/data-tools/2018-known-and-probable-grizzly-bear-mortalities-greater-yellowstone-ecosystem>
- <https://www.usgs.gov/data-tools/2019-known-and-probable-grizzly-bear-mortalities-greater-yellowstone-ecosystem>



This figure shows the cumulative death toll for grizzly bears each year 2013-2018 with the passage of time from when they emerge from their dens in the spring to when they hibernate during the fall. Death tolls during 2015-2017 shattered all previous records, but these records were in turn shattered during 2018 when 71 grizzlies were recorded as being killed in the GYE.

### The Fascinating Roots of the Word “Grizzly” with Chrysti the Wordsmith

Finally, a bit of fun: here the always entertaining Chrysti the Wordsmith shares the roots of the term “grizzly.” Patrick Gass, a sergeant in the Lewis and Clark Expedition, first dubbed the bear the “grizzly,” a “bold and farocious” animal.” Chrysti says that “Grizzly, meaning ‘grey-haired’ must have seemed, to 19th century American English speakers, an appropriate moniker for a creature with the silver-tipped fur typical of many individuals.”

<https://www.bozemandailychronicle.com/ruckus/chrysti/chrysti-the-wordsmith-is-a-grizzly-a-horrible-bear>

### 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 last August's 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 9<sup>th</sup> 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  
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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