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## Grizzly Times 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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### Dear Friends of Grizzly Bears,

This is a record shattering year for grizzly bear deaths - and we have another month or so before bears are snug and safe underground in dens. Big game hunting season, now underway, is especially dangerous for grizzlies, which are often attracted to the remains of dead elk. A total of 64 dead grizzlies have died so far this year, beating the all-time year-end record of 61 deaths set during 2015.

And, in the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem (NCDE), a record 38 bears have died at a time when population growth has stalled - and could be declining. Nonetheless, the government continues to barge ahead with its delisting agenda, possibly releasing a draft rule by the end of November - which would coincide with the holidays, and (perhaps) deliberately thwart public input.

### Government and Media Spin Lowball Alarming Level of Bear Deaths

You would never know we have a massive problem by reading the papers, where agencies spin the story to minimize the deaths, while some officials, especially in Wyoming, fuel hysteria about bears, and possibly contribute to yet more deaths. On this point, University of Utah writing and rhetoric professor Maximilian Werner wrote this powerful piece on the recent fatality of Mark Uptain, challenging both the media coverage and unsubstantiated claims made by Wyoming. It was posted as a guest column on *Grizzly Times*, and also published by Counter Punch. Thank you, Maximilian!

<https://www.grizzlytimes.org/single-post/2018/10/22/The-Rhetoric-and-Reality-of-Death-by-Grizzly>

In yet another *Grizzly Times* blog, David corrected other lies published in *The Hill*, a paper closely read by congressmen and politicians in DC. David rebuts statements made by Terry Andersen of the Political Economy Research Group, a right-wing think tank.

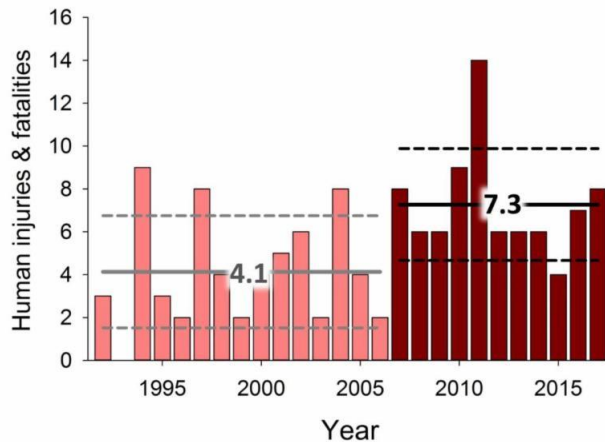
As David says, "Terry's claims - like those of many currently advocating removal of ESA protections - are that: (1) grizzly bears in the contiguous U.S. are no different than grizzly

bears anywhere else in North America; (2) an isolated population of 500 bears is sufficient to ensure long term viability; (3) the Yellowstone population numbered only “136” at the time it was given ESA protections, thence increasing to 700 bears; (4) there are more grizzlies now than existed at the time of first European contact, e.g., the Lewis and Clark expedition; and, (5) there were few if any grizzly bears in mountainous regions of the West. *These claims are comprehensively wrong.*”

<https://www.grizzlytimes.org/single-post/2018/10/20/Unsubstantiated-Claims-about-Our-Grizzly-Bears-by-a-Political-Economist>

And, David had the following piece published in Montana’s *Livingston Enterprise* and the *Idaho State Journal*, in which he criticized the official narrative purportedly explaining the current crisis, and articulated a more plausible evidence-based explanation of the dynamics driving human-grizzly bear conflicts: [https://www.idahostatejournal.com/opinion/columns/the-tragedy-of-grizzly-bear-management/article\\_fcc3f8b7-2b75-50d8-b5ba-c470facc904d.html](https://www.idahostatejournal.com/opinion/columns/the-tragedy-of-grizzly-bear-management/article_fcc3f8b7-2b75-50d8-b5ba-c470facc904d.html)

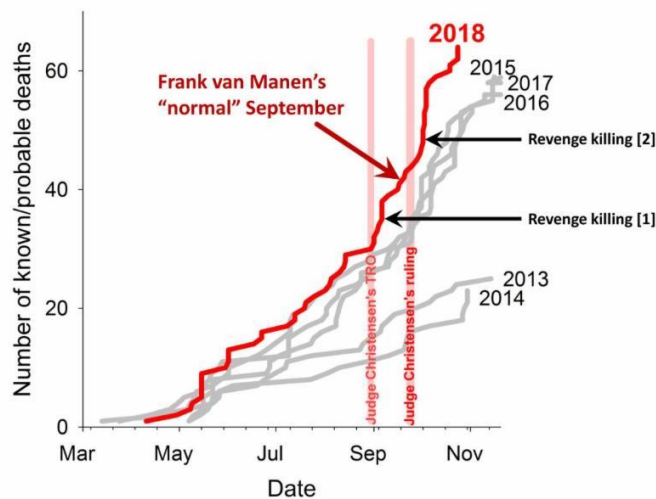
The graph below shows the boost in injuries following the loss of whitebark pine, and a result of increasing conflicts over meat (primarily cows and elk).



*This graph shows vertical bars that are proportional to the number of people injured and/or killed during grizzly bear encounters in the Yellowstone region. The numbers '4.1' and '7.3' represent the inter-annual averages for the periods 1992-2006 and 2007-2017, respectively. Numbers of human injuries jumped substantially coincident with the culmination of whitebark pine losses around 2007.*

And, there is yet another example of government officials lying about the problem (unquestioned by Wyoming Public Media, which reported the lie). WPM’s recent piece features Interagency Grizzly Study Team Leader Frank Van Manen, who is supposedly an objective government scientist. Here Van Manen cherry-picked the month of September, and then misrepresented the data to argue that last month we did not experience an “abnormally high” number of grizzly bear deaths, while casting a blind eye on the larger unfolding catastrophe, as well as, the data for September itself.

The graphic below shows the lie clearly: <http://www.wyomingpublicmedia.org/post/grizzly-death-september-not-abnormally-high#stream/0>



*This graph shows the accumulation of grizzly bear deaths in the Yellowstone region, by date, for the years 2013-2018. The total so far for 2018 has already broken all records, with the month of November still ahead of us. The dates of Judge Christensen's Temporary Restraining Order (August 30<sup>th</sup>) and final ruling (September 24<sup>th</sup>) are shown as vertical pink lines, along with the spurt of revenge killing by Wyoming managers and hunters that followed, along with the toll for September, which the IGBST's Frank van Manen described as being "normal."*

## IN THE NEWS:

### ▪ **A Bit of Hope: Inspiring Interview with French Advocate Manon Dene about Romanian Grizzlies in a *Grizzly Times* Podcast**

Last month Humane Society International convened a fascinating workshop in Seeley Lake, MT with Romanian brown bear advocates and managers. (Brown bears, *Ursus arctos*, are of the same species as our grizzlies). While the problems with grizzlies are similar in Romania, and indeed anywhere bears roam, Romania supports roughly 7,000 bears - about 4 times the number that survives today in the entire lower-48 states - in an ecosystem about the size of Greater Yellowstone. Here, in Episode 31 of the *Grizzly Times* podcast, Manon Dene of HSI shares inspiring perspectives and keen insights on her work and aspirations for coexistence with bears and other predators.

You can listen on YouTube, Sticher, iTunes, and SoundCloud.

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

### ▪ **Keeping the Public in the Dark: A Classic Ploy of Despots**

The Center for Biological Diversity recently revealed a memo by the Trump administration articulating a deeply disturbing (but hardly surprising) policy of keeping the public in the dark on endangered species, including Yellowstone grizzly bears. This could have come straight out of the Despots Handbook:

[https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/news/press\\_releases/2018/endangered-species-act-10-19-2018.php](https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/news/press_releases/2018/endangered-species-act-10-19-2018.php)

### ▪ **Cory Booker Champions Tribes, Grizzlies, and the Sacred**

And to leave on a positive note, Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) again came out swinging for the bear and tribal interests. Following a recent Senate hearing chaired by John Barrasso (R-WY) aimed at papering the trail to gut the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and legislatively overturning the federal court ruling that returned ESA protections for Yellowstone's grizzly

bears, Booker reaffirmed his commitment to the ESA and tribal concerns. An unprecedented coalition of over fifty Tribes have rallied around the grizzly bear, which they view as a relative.

Booker specifically opposed “any attempts to interfere with the court decision in Crow Tribe, et al v. Zinke,” one of the tribal cases opposing delisting. Way to go Senator Booker!

[https://nativenewsonline.net/currents/senator-cory-booker-leads-support-for-tribes-in-defense-of-the-sacred/?fbclid=IwAR0nh77wV6RIDWVPe\\_3bteTWUqIh0LMkCoUeChkVd\\_DUXwJ7S6g6Dvpr5wc](https://nativenewsonline.net/currents/senator-cory-booker-leads-support-for-tribes-in-defense-of-the-sacred/?fbclid=IwAR0nh77wV6RIDWVPe_3bteTWUqIh0LMkCoUeChkVd_DUXwJ7S6g6Dvpr5wc)

**Please Consider a Gift to *Grizzly Times* this Year!**

*Grizzly Times* needs your help! We've retired, and are doing this full-time work pretty much gratis. If you were following the recent delisting court case, or were in the hearing room, you know that David's role was absolutely vital to the litigation success that restored grizzly bear protections to Yellowstone's bears. Talented as they are, the attorneys could not have won the case without David's scientific expertise. There will be continued demands on David's time as this case is appealed to the 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit, and as delisting of NCDE grizzlies heats up in the next few months.

As you know from reading our newsletters, blogs, etc., grizzly bears need help more now than ever, as threats are mounting. We will be expanding our reach to focus more on the NCDE - and we need to do more to help the bears in the beleaguered Cabinet Yaak and Selkirks ecosystems.

During this holiday season, we hope you will consider a donation to our efforts! As we do not have a separate nonprofit, Conservation Congress, a tax-deductible organization, has agreed to be our fiscal sponsor (thank you Denise!).

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

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