



# Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee News Release

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## IGBC Celebrates 25 Years of Grizzly Bear Recovery

The Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee (IGBC) will celebrate a quarter century of grizzly bear recovery on June 21, 2008, with a public ceremony at the Blackfoot – Clearwater Wildlife Management Area. The event follows a two-day meeting of the IGBC at the nearby Rich Ranch.

The public is welcome to attend the day-long event, which will include displays and demonstrations of bear-related educational and safety programs and a ceremony featuring dignitaries associated with IGBC and grizzly bear recovery. The site, managed by the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, is about an hour's drive from Missoula. A map with directions is posted on the IGBC website (IGBCOnline.org). Participants should be prepared for uncertain weather and bring drinking water. Light refreshments will be available as well as a catered barbeque lunch for a charge.

The IGBC was formed in 1983 to help ensure recovery of viable grizzly bear populations and their habitat in the lower 48 states through interagency coordination of policy, planning, management, and research. The Committee consists of representatives from the USDA Forest Service, the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and representatives of the state wildlife agencies of Idaho, Montana, Washington and Wyoming. In the interest of international coordination and cooperation, the Canadian Wildlife Service is also represented.

When the grizzly bear was granted protection under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) in 1975, biologists estimated that as few as 600-800 grizzlies survived in the lower 48 states and that the population was declining. Today, biologists estimate that number may have doubled and grizzly bears are believed to be increasing their numbers in most recovery ecosystems. One population, in the Yellowstone Ecosystem, has already achieved recovery and been removed from listing under the ESA. Grizzly bears have returned to portions of their historic range that have not seen a living grizzly in generations. The IGBC has played a central role in achieving this success.

establishment of the IGBC, decisions about grizzly bear recovery often faced problems when they with jurisdictional boundaries between federal and state agencies. Funding to implement grizzly bear ctions on the ground was also scarce and had to compete against other priorities. The inclusion of administrative staff with the authority within each agency to make decisions and to support them with GBC was a significant turning point for grizzly bear recovery.

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### IGBC Advisors

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