

# **FINAL WORKING DRAFT FWP R2 “NUISANCE” GRIZZLY BEAR RELOCATION PROTOCOL & INTERIM DECISION-MAKING PROCESS FOR GRIZZLY OCCURENCES IN OUTLYING AREAS**

***A cooperative relationship between Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks Region 2, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services, Bureau of Land Management, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, the Lolo, Helena-Lewis and Clark, Bitterroot and Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forests, Flathead Indian Reservation, Nature Conservancy, Blackfoot Challenge and other Cooperators***

Formalized September 2019

The Interagency Grizzly Bear Guidelines (1986) include a plan for determining grizzly bear “nuisance” status and for controlling nuisance bears. In accordance with the Interagency Grizzly Bear Guidelines (IGBG), this document outlines relocation practices used by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) Region 2 (R2) bear management team. With multiagency cooperation, decisions along the south end of the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem (NCDE) Grizzly Bear Recovery Area, are made jointly. That is, objectives, procedures, and sites for relocation of “nuisance” and non-nuisance grizzly bears within the territories of R2 are determined through prior, or “at-the-time” consultation. Note, the Grizzly Bear Recovery area is now referred to as the Primary Conservation Area (PCA) under the new 2018 Grizzly Bear Conservation Strategies (CS) (Map 1), and, the occupied grizzly habitats buffering the PCA are now referred to as Zone 1.

The purpose of this document is threefold:

- 1) This document summarizes the existing R2 approach, used since 1986, for relocating grizzly bears on the Lolo and Helena-Lewis and Clark (HLC) National Forests and other lands within the PCA and Zone 1. It retains direction from the IGBG, coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Office of the Grizzly Bear Coordinator, and updates contact lists and selection of relocation sites within the R2 territories along the south end of the PCA/Zone 1.

- 2) This document addresses the standard procedures used for determining grizzly bear “nuisance” status, “pre-emptive” or “non-target” status in Montana since 1986. It also, summarizes procedures for releasing bears on site of capture and at short distance release sites within perspective grizzly bear home ranges. Often, when bears are captured for research purposes, or captured during management actions and are considered “non-target”, or categorized as “pre-emptive”, an alternative release site is required. And in certain emergency situations, for example, capture situations involving grizzly bear family groups, it may be necessary to release on-site or near-site.
- 3) And finally, this relocation document outlines an approach for making decisions for grizzlies captured in outlying areas. It recommends remote geographic areas for relocating bears within the R2 territories, but outside of the PCA/Zone 1. This interim coordination process includes updated national forest and district contacts; other land agency administrator contacts; and uses the same guidelines for responses and relocations for “nuisance”, “pre-emptive” and “non-target” grizzly bears captured in outlying areas within R2.

Objectives of the relocation program document are to:

- 1) Provide for management and recovery of R2 grizzly bears within the Lolo and HLC National Forest and other lands on the south end of the NCDE in accordance with the CS, the Grizzly Bear Special Rule (50 CFR 17.40), the Endangered Species Act, the Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan and any other documents pertaining to grizzlies;
- 2) Provide clarification for the management and relocation of bears in outlying areas of Western Montana; and
- 3) Provide for human safety when relocating bears; and
- 4) Minimize future potential for grizzly-human conflicts.

## **FWP R2 Grizzly Bear Management Decision Making Process**

In order to determine the correct initial response or action for grizzly bear management issues, the FWP R2 Bear Management Specialist will be contacted first. In regard to livestock depredations, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Wildlife Services (WS) District Supervisor will be contacted first. Grizzly bear conflicts involving livestock are under the jurisdiction of WS, but depredation-related actions are handled jointly with FWP R2. If the WS is unavailable for livestock incidents call the FWP R2 bear manager. In the event the bear manager or FWP superiors are unavailable, contact any of the below mentioned representatives. Everyone on the primary contact list will know who to contact and how to proceed.

Prior to making any decisions on where a grizzly bear will be relocated within the PCA/Zone 1, follow the recommended procedures and discuss options with appropriate land managers to determine a release area and current activities at/near any potential release sites. The same procedures will be followed for any grizzly issues or captures in outlying R2 territories. Contact lists and summaries for dealing with grizzlies within the PCA area and in outlying area are below.

**PRIMARY CONTACTS USFWS (OFFICE OF THE GRIZZLY BEAR COORDINATOR):**

Hillary Cooley, USFWS, Grizzly Bear Recovery Coordinator,  
406-273-8002 (cell), 406-293-4161 ext. 205 (office).

Wayne Kasworm, USFWS, Cabinet/Yaak Ecosystem Program Grizzly Biologist,  
406-529-5167 (cell), 406-293-4161 ext. 205 (office).

**PRIMARY CONTACTS FWP R2 BEAR MANAGEMENT:**

Randy Arnold, FWP R2 Regional Supervisor,  
406-542-5504 (office), 406-552-8708 (cell).

Mike Thompson, FWP R2 Regional Wildlife Manager,  
406-542-5516 (office), 406-531-5378 (cell).

Jamie Jonkel, FWP R2 Bear Management Specialist,  
406-542-5508 (office), 406-544-1447 (cell).

Eli Hampson, FWP R2 Wildlife Bear Management Team,  
406-210-3213 (cell).

Eric Graham, FWP R2 Wildlife Bear Management Team/Blackfoot Challenge,  
406-240-3132 (cell).

**PRIMARY USDA WS CONTACTS (LIVESTOCK DEPREDACTIONS):**

Kraig Glaizer, USDA WS District Supervisor,  
406-458-0106 (office), 406-439-5943 (cell), 406-202-1303 (home).

Bart Smith, USDA WS Powell/Granite/Deerlodge/Ravalli Counties,  
406-660-0368 (cell), 406-846-1545 (home).

Ted North, USDA WS Missoula/Mineral Counties  
406-274-4856 (cell), 406-726-3067 (home).

John Meidke, USDA WS Lewis and Clark County,  
406-855-8429 (cell).

## **PRIMARY BEAR MANAGEMENT CONTACTS IN ADJACENT AREAS:**

Tim Manley, FWP R1 Bear Management Specialist,  
406-751-4584 (office), 406-250-1265 (cell), 406-892-0802 (home).

Mike Madel, FWP R4 Bear Management Specialist,  
406-466-5100 (cell).

Kevin Frey, FWP R3 Bear Management Specialist,  
406-581-6981 (cell).

Stacey Courville, Flathead Indian Reservation Bear Management Specialist,  
406-270-3387 (cell).

## **Conflict Reduction by Minimizing the Need to Relocate**

The overreaching goal of bear management is to minimize, to the greatest extent possible, the need for grizzly bear management and relocation. But in the event a grizzly bear conflict event occurs on the south end of the NCDE/PCA/Zone 1, or in outlying areas around R2, the situation will be assessed immediately to determine the most appropriate management approach. Sometimes trapping, removing or relocating the bear will be the only option, but often, a simple preventative management action will circumvent the situation and reduce future conflicts.

### **Preventive management R2 approaches:**

1. FWP R2 will continue to work with other agencies, various Non-Government Organizations (NGO), watershed work groups, communities and rural districts in cooperative efforts to provide education, resolve bear management issues, and mitigate for conflicts through preventative management actions.
2. FWP R2, in conjunction with agency and NGO partners will continue to educate federal, state and private land recreators and hunters, work with private landowners and distribute informational brochures on being safe in bear country and continue efforts to produce useful best management practices materials.
3. Signs will be posted at trailheads, and other access points, to inform the public of recommendations for traveling and camping practices in grizzly bear habitat. FWP R2 and other agencies will continue to work towards securing human foods, garbage, and other bear attractants at administrative facilities, campgrounds, and other areas of human use within grizzly bear habitat. This effort will focus upon implementation of the current food storage orders for forest users and installation of bear-resistant storage devices/buildings at permitted or administrative structures.
4. FWP R2, other agencies and NGO partners will continue to provide information and training opportunities to the public, hunters and rural land owners on

identification of grizzly bears, use of bear spray, and recommended practices for living, working and recreating in grizzly bear habitat.

5. FWP R2, other agencies and NGO partners will continue to cooperate and provide support development and implementation of local community working groups and bear awareness workshops, focused on decreasing human food availability at private residences and human safety in general.
6. And finally, whenever feasible, MFWP R2, WS, other agencies, and NGO partners will continue to address attractant issues as they are discovered, and work diligently on mitigation projects with private property owners, refuse companies, communities to reduce the availability of attractants. That is, instill good stewardship practices, remove or contain as many attractants on the landscape and create an attractant free environment, if possible.
7. And finally, the first step with every management response, rather than simply setting a trap and removing or relocating the bear, will be to assess what is causing the issue and contain or remove the attractant.

## **Guidelines to Determine “Nuisance” Bear Classification and Appropriate Control Actions**

The 1986 IGBG outlined definitions, criteria and processes for dealing with grizzly bears that damage property and/or are aggressive towards people. The IGBG terms these standards “nuisance” situations for bears. In conjunction with the USFWS Grizzly Bear Coordinator, MFWP R2 and/or WS (livestock depredation) will determine “nuisance” status. Generally, throughout the ecosystem NCDE representatives from FWP, USFWS, WS, the Blackfoot Nation or Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, and the local United States Forest Service (USFS) or other land managers evaluate and determine if the bear should be relocated or removed from the population.

A diagram showing the decision process for determining “nuisance” status is shown in Figure 1. The IGBG contains descriptions and recommendations for “nuisance” grizzly bear control actions, both of which follow the IGBG’s control action plan that considers: type of offense, condition, sex, age of the bear and the number of times the bear has committed the offenses (Table 1.)

The three offense conditions are:

Condition A: The bear causes significant depredation to lawfully present livestock or regularly uses unnatural food materials (human and livestock foods, garbage, home gardens, livestock carrion, and game meat in possession of man) that have been reasonably secured in a bear-resistant manner, resulting in conditioning of the bear or significant loss of property.

Condition B: The bear has displayed aggressive (not defensive) behavior toward humans which constitutes a demonstrable immediate or potential threat to human safety and/or minor human injury resulted from a human/bear encounter.

Condition C: The bear has had an encounter with people resulting in a substantial human injury or loss of human life. Condition C bears are not eligible for relocation. And, if a bear has acted with aggression toward humans that does not involve one of the 3 types of response detailed above (except under certain extraneous situations) the bear will be removed from the population.

#### Additional Considerations:

Extraneous situations: Note, it's possible that a bear that was involved in a human mauling or charge was acting in defense of young, defense of a food source, was involved in a surprise encounter or was intentionally provoked. Representatives of the management agencies involved (including USFWS, FWP R2, and the land management agency involved such as USFS, Glacier National Park (GNP), Blackfoot Indian Reservation (BIR), Flathead Indian Reservation (FIR)) and WS, will determine the response to such incidents by joint consultation. This response may be to leave the bear alone and temporarily close the area.

Animal health and population parameters: Injuries, physical condition, survivability, age and sex are also considered during the decision process to either remove or relocate an offending bear. For example, female and younger grizzlies are relocated more often, whereas, orphaned cubs, male bears, older age bears are more often removed from the population.

Female grizzly bears are considered more essential to the population than males, because they produce and care for the young. On the other hand, while the loss of a male usually will not affect reproductive rates, males do contribute genetic variation. Considering these factors, greater priority is placed on maintaining female bears than male bears. Repeat offenders and severely injured or sick bears, male or female, are usually removed.

The success of relocations was discussed in the Flathead National Forest Grizzly Bear Relocation Plan (Revised October 2016.): A successful relocation was defined as one in which a bear did not resume "nuisance" behavior for at least two years from the relocation date, and analysis showed that relocation of males has been less successful than of females, and that relocations of livestock-depredating bears were less successful for all classes of bears.

Habituated Behavior: Granted, it is next to impossible for grizzlies and other wildlife, to not exhibit some habituated behavior. In order to travel and access habitat in the state of Montana bears need to cross through and feed along the urban-wildland and agricultural interface. As a result of constant interactions with humans, grizzlies have learned to become complacent in the presence of humans. But, in cases of extreme habituated behavior, where bears start approaching humans and frequenting developed areas to obtain natural foods, they can become dangerous. In these types of

situations habituated grizzlies may be aversive conditioned, relocated or removed from the population.

Food-conditioned Behavior: Food conditioning occurs when a bear has obtained human-related foods and learns to associate human presence with opportunity to obtain such foods. Mildly food-conditioned bears can be aversive conditioned and/or relocated to areas that have minimal opportunities for unnatural food. Bears exhibiting extreme food-conditioned behavior are usually destroyed.

“Pre-emptive” and “Non-target” Bear Classifications: In certain grizzly bear management situations, grizzly bears are determined to not be in “nuisance” status, but where trapping and relocating may be recommended. These types of bears are categorized as “pre-emptive” captures. Often, during management actions, “non-target” grizzlies are captured. That is, a bear other than the one causing the conflict (an innocent bystander if you will) ends up in a snare or culvert traps. In these situations, the bear is classified as “non-target” and is either released at-site or near-site. On occasion “non-target” bears may be classified as “pre-emptive” in order to move them further distances.

## **Criteria and Guidelines for Aversive Conditioning**

As a first step, in most bear management situations, every effort will be made to remove or contain the attractant that lured in the bear. In certain cases, aversive conditioning may be the best response, for example, erecting electric fence to deter the bear. Grizzlies in management situations, that have just discovered an attractant for the first time or bears that meet the definitions for “pre-emptive” moves (see below), may be candidates for aversive conditioning based upon a site-specific evaluation. Aversive conditioning is normally applied by FWP R2 or under their direction. There are a variety of acceptable methods:

1. Release the bear at-site or near-site using the “hard release” release approach. That is aversive condition the bear with the use of dogs, noise makers, rubber bullets and cracker shells as it leaves the culvert trap.
2. Use of trained dogs using the “bear herding” approach, a form of passive aversive conditioning, where the bears are negatively impacted by harassment with dogs.
3. Use of electrified mats, fences or objects at the conflict site, another form of passive aversive conditioning, where the bears are negatively impacted, through electric shock.
4. Use of capsaicin spraying devices at the conflict site, another form of passive aversive conditioning, where the bears are negatively impacted by an eye and olfactory irritant.
5. Use of noise makers, propane cannons, scare devices, motion alarms, rubber bullets, cracker shells, where the bears are negatively impacted by scare devices or pain.
6. Other aversive conditioning approaches such as tasers or other methods not mentioned.

## **Guidelines for “Pre-emptive”, “Non-target” Relocation**

As mentioned above, in certain grizzly bear management situations, grizzly bears are determined to not be in “nuisance” status, but where trapping and relocating may be recommended. The IGBG describe situations when preventive action may be warranted, but they contain limited definition and detail for guiding decisions in these cases. This section is intended to provide more detail in order to add consistency in decision-making relative to preventative actions involving “pre-emptive” classification.

### Definition

A “pre-emptive” situation for a bear may exist when any, of the following situations occur:

1. A bear's behavior does not lead to a “nuisance” classification, but one or more of the following apply.
2. The bear frequents human development areas on a continuing basis, but no aggressive behavior by the bear has been demonstrated or documented, but if the behavior continues the bear could be injured, killed or become food conditioned.
3. The bear frequents areas in PCA, or outlying areas, in areas of human development or rural ranch land where attractant sources could tempt the bear to develop food-conditioned behavior.
4. The bear utilizes orchard, crops or natural foods and/or livestock or game carcasses that are near human habitation sites, are not reasonably secured, where the bear could eventually develop food-conditioned behavior.
5. Previous “nuisance” and/or “pre-emptive” actions involving individual bears may alter the “nuisance” or, “pre-emptive” classification.

### Decision Processes for “pre-emptive” capture and relocations

Considerations for the “pre-emptive” capture and relocation of grizzly bears will be decided and implemented through a cooperative consultation process between FWP R2, the USFWS and relocation sites will involve the appropriate land management representatives. On occasion, WS many also recommend “pre-emptive” capture and relocation for grizzlies in and around livestock operations. Processes will follow definitions and guidelines contained in this document and the IGBG, with communication back to the involved land manager and all parties involved.

### Guidelines for Actions

1. Bears proposed for relocation will be held until coordination with appropriate managers is concluded.
2. Relocated bears will be moved a reasonable distance from the capture site. But attempt to keep the bear in or near its home range area, when possible.



3. Mutually agreed to relocation sites will be pre-determined or decided at the time of capture. Every effort will be made to limit the potential for human/bear interactions at the relocation site. These sites may be the same as those used in the PCA for “nuisance” bears or may be different based on coordination with land managers within the PCA or outlying areas.
4. Relocations may require longer distances if a bear returns to the same attraction site/area over a short period of time or if time is needed to clean up attractants.
5. Clean up of attractants at the capture site, in order to prevent repeat problems, is important to the success of preventative actions. Site remedies will be identified and discussed with the site owner or manager.
6. Tagging and radio collaring of “pre-emptive” bears is useful in the event of repeat offenders and actions. But it is not required. The rationale for marking or not marking a bear will be documented as a part of the case/incident report.
7. Coordination requirements found in other agreements or guidelines also apply where/when warranted.
8. A “pre-emptive” relocation does not count as a “nuisance strike” against the bear.

#### Decision processes for “non-target” capture and relocations

Grizzly bears unrelated to the offense are often captured during management actions. This is especially true for areas where there are large concentrations of grizzlies. These types of captures are classified as “non-target”. These situations will undoubtedly become more common as grizzlies continue to recolonize outlying areas. Considerations for classifying grizzlies as “non-target” are determined by the bear management specialist or WS agent. On occasion “non-target” grizzly bears captured during management actions will be released at site, especially if the bear involved is part of an uninvolved family group.

Most “non-target” bears, in order to get them away from the conflict site, will be relocated to an adjacent remote site within their home range. In certain areas of R2, however, it may not be appropriate for a near-site release. For example, in high human activity areas, or agricultural areas where human safety is a factor, or where a bear may not be safe. Depending on the situation, it may be best to take a “non-target” bear back to the PCA/Zone 1, rather than a local site. Considerations for short distance-release sites will be predetermined, or at the time of capture, through cooperative consultation between FWP R2 and the local land manager representatives. Tagging and radio collaring of “non-target” bears is useful, but it is not required. The rationale for marking or not marking a bear will be documented as a part of the case/incident report.

### **Guidelines for Short-distance Research Grizzly Relocations**

Occasionally, during grizzly bear research trapping and handling events, it may be necessary to relocate bears short distances. Environmental factors at the site, such as spring snow melt run-off or a water body, where recovering bears could possibly drown, or steep-cliffy terrain, may require that the bear be moved. Multiple bears can be attracted to baited trap sites and it is not always safe for recently-drugged bears. In

such cases the bear management specialist or WS Agent may need to take bears to a safer site for recovery and release. Considerations for short distance-release sites involving research bears, as with non-target bears, will be predetermined, or at the time of capture, through cooperative consultation between FWP R2 and the local land manager representatives. Tagging and radio collaring of research bears is useful, but it is not required. The rationale for marking or not marking a bear will be documented as a part of the case/incident report.

## **Guidelines for Emergency Grizzly Family Group On-site/Short distance Release Situations**

On rare occasions, during management situations, it may be necessary to release a captured bear at-site, or very near-site, on private lands or in areas not considered appropriate for grizzly bears. For example, when it is impossible to capture an entire grizzly bear family group at a management or “pre-emptive” trapping action, or when a non-target cub or mother is captured, the bear manager and/or Wildlife Service Agent, may make a spur of the moment decision to release. Regardless, if the decision is made for safety or ethical reasoning, it is important that the public and agency supervisors understand that under high stress situations this may be the only option. Repercussions will be inevitable, especially in areas where there is no community acceptance for grizzlies, or in areas where grizzlies are not politically supported.

In the same vein, there may be certain management situations where members of family group will regrettably be separated, injured or killed during the process. And rarer yet, individual members of the group, or the entire family group, may have to be destroyed. Again, regardless, of the reasoning or the situation, it is important that the public and agency supervisors understand that under high stress situations this may occur. Repercussions will be inevitable, especially with the private sector that favor bears.

These types of bear management situations are high stress. Often emergencies occur without any ability to communicate or consult with superiors or land agency representatives. There are no processes for these types of situations within the IGBG, therefore, it is of utmost importance that the agency and the public be supportive of the above-mentioned actions and assist with statements of support. Tagging and radio collaring bears during these types of emergency situations may not be feasible. The rationale for marking or not marking a bear will be documented as a part of the case/incident report.

## Relocation Decision Process

As mentioned above, in conjunction with the USFWS Grizzly Bear Coordinator, MFWP R2 will determine “nuisance”, “pre-emptive” or “non-target” status. After this initial assessment, one of the primary contacts, from the list above will reach out to various land managers to determine if relocation is feasible. As a first step, contact the appropriate land manager representatives where a bear may be released to determine if the bear will be accepted. If the land managers agree to accept a bear, local field staff will be contacted in order to select the best release location. The processes will be similar for relocation sites within the PCA and for relocation sites in outlying areas:

### Relocation process for the northern portions of the PCA (FWP R1)

Some of the best and remotest habitat for relocating grizzly bears in the PCA can be found within FWP R1 on the Flathead National Forest (FNF). Over the years, the majority of FWP R2’s “nuisance” and “pre-emptive” grizzly bears have been relocated to the FNF. If relocation of the bear is determined to be better suited to be on the north end of the PCA than FWP R2 and the USFWS Grizzly Bear Coordinator follow the procedures recommended in Flathead National Forest Grizzly Bear Relocation Plan (Revised October 2016.)

### Relocation process for the southern portions of the PCA and Zone 1 (FWP R2)

Although not as remote, there are sites in the R2 portions of the PCA/Zone 1 suitable for “nuisance”, “pre-emptive” and “non-target” status grizzly bears. If the south end of the PCA/Zone 1 is deemed appropriate for relocation than recommendations in this document are to be followed.

First, contact the district, supervisors, rangers or biologists on either the Lolo and HLC National Forest. Within this portion of the PCA/Zone 1 there are large tracts of remote BLM, DNRC, USFWS, FWP and private lands. If these lands are deemed more appropriate, for example, lands owned by the Nature Conservancy or Stimpson Timber, than consultation will occur with the appropriate representatives of those lands. In the event that the local land management representatives, acting representatives, biologists are unavailable, than personnel at the supervisor’s office will be contacted, and they will contact appropriate field staff to discuss sites and current human activities. (Phone List 1 and Phone List 2).

### Relocation process for grizzlies captured in outlying areas (FWP R2)

In recent times, throughout FWP R2 territories, more grizzlies have recolonized historic ranges. Grizzly activity has been verified in the headwaters of the Clarkfork Drainage, the lower reaches of the Clarkfork Drainage, the Bitterroot Valley and are now considered common throughout the Blackfoot Watershed. Although not as remote, and with multiple rural agricultural and urban centers, there are sites in the outlying portions of R2 suitable for “pre-emptive” and “non-target” status grizzly bears. Although

controversial, it is recommended that most “nuisance” status grizzlies be relocated back to the PCA/Zone 1 and destroyed when severe food-conditioned behavior is exhibited. But, depending on the situation, for example, an extraneous situations, or if relocation has been approved, there is a possibility that a “first offence” “nuisance” grizzly might be relocated back into an outlying area.

Although no actual relocation sites are specifically identified in this document there are remote sites throughout the Lolo and HLC, Beaverhead-Deerlodge or Bitterroot National Forests where grizzly bears could be relocated. If relocation to an outlying area (not within the PCA) is deemed appropriate than recommendations in this document are to be followed.

As a first step, FWP R2 or the USFWS Grizzly Bear Coordinator, will contact the district, supervisors, rangers or biologists on either the Lolo and HLC National Forest, Beaverhead-Deerlodge or Bitterroot National Forest to assess where relocation is recommended. In R2’s outlying areas there are remote tracts of BLM, DNRC, USFWS, FWP and private lands. If these lands are deemed more appropriate, then consultation will occur with the appropriate representatives of those lands. In the event that the local land management representatives, acting representatives, or biologists are unavailable, then personnel at the supervisor’s office will be contacted, and they will contact appropriate field staff to discuss sites and current human activities (Phone List 3)..

## **Relocation Guidelines for land managers**

The National Forest or the equivalent land management personnel will consider the following guidelines in determining if a bear will be accepted and suitable relocation sites.

1. Bear has no record of unprovoked, unnatural aggressive behavior towards people.
2. Bear is in good physical condition and not injured.
3. Each bear must be evaluated prior to release. If agency personnel determine that the bear presents a greater potential risk than benefit to the population, it will be deemed an unacceptable bear.
4. For permanent relocations, long distances may increase the probability of success.
5. Site selection for livestock-depredating bears will include consideration of livestock availability and social acceptance.
6. Any wilderness relocations will be evaluated at the time of the request and will minimize impacts to recreational users and other wilderness resources. Food-conditioned bears normally will not be relocated into wilderness. Primary release periods are before July 1 and after October 1.
7. Each “nuisance” bear should be radio collared and tattooed or micro chipped, except for young accompanying their mother. “Pre-emptive” and “non-target” bears will be ear tagged, tattooed and biochipped, but will not always be radio-collared.

8. Based on relocation site or individual bear behavior, it may be necessary or prudent to monitor bear location and movement for a few days after a release and periodically thereafter; with the information provided to the specific ranger districts.
9. Historic nuisance bear relocation sites on the south end of the PCA and Zone 1 will generally be used, except special seasonal and individual bear considerations may require use of unidentified sites.
10. Relocation sites for “pre-emptive” and “non-target” bear relocations may be on-site, local, or longer distance as decided upon by consultation among the involved agencies.

<sup>1</sup> These are guidelines only and not directive of agency action in each case. The specific decision on each bear is made by management agencies in consultation with each other

## **Grizzly Bear Relocation Procedures**

Bears captured, handled, managed, removed and relocated on the south end of the PCA and outlying areas of R2 will normally be handled by FWP, or other members on the Primary Contact list mentioned above.

In order to deal with general public safety and the safety of on-site personnel, operational procedures developed by the USFWS “A Manual for Handling Bears for Managers and Researchers” (April, 1993) for bear capture, handling and releasing will be adhered to. Emphasis should be given to the following guidelines:

1. The minimum required number of people and vehicles will be on site at the time of release.
2. All persons on site at the time of the release will be in a secure position.
3. Most releases are expected to be at or behind a closed gate. If the release site is within a roaded area, the District Ranger may choose to restrict public use of the road system to protect the bear and the public.
4. If a bear is released in proximity to another adjacent land management agency’s land, the appropriate adjacent land management agency personnel will be notified.
5. For relocations onto the Lolo and HLC, Beaverhead-Deerlodge and Bitterroot National Forest, the Forest Supervisors will be contacted first to see if relocation on the forest is feasible. If approved the District Ranger will be contacted so that a suitable release site can be mutually agreed upon, considering both human safety and the well-being of the bear. If the District Ranger is not available, the acting District Ranger will be contacted, and a decision will be made in concert with the District or Forest wildlife biologist.
6. District Rangers and/or district wildlife biologists will be responsible for notifying field crews in the release area about the presence of a relocated bear as appropriate, and for any public access restrictions in the release area.
7. Condition A bears, “preemptive” bears or “non-target” bear are not expected to be more dangerous than resident bears in the release area, and no further

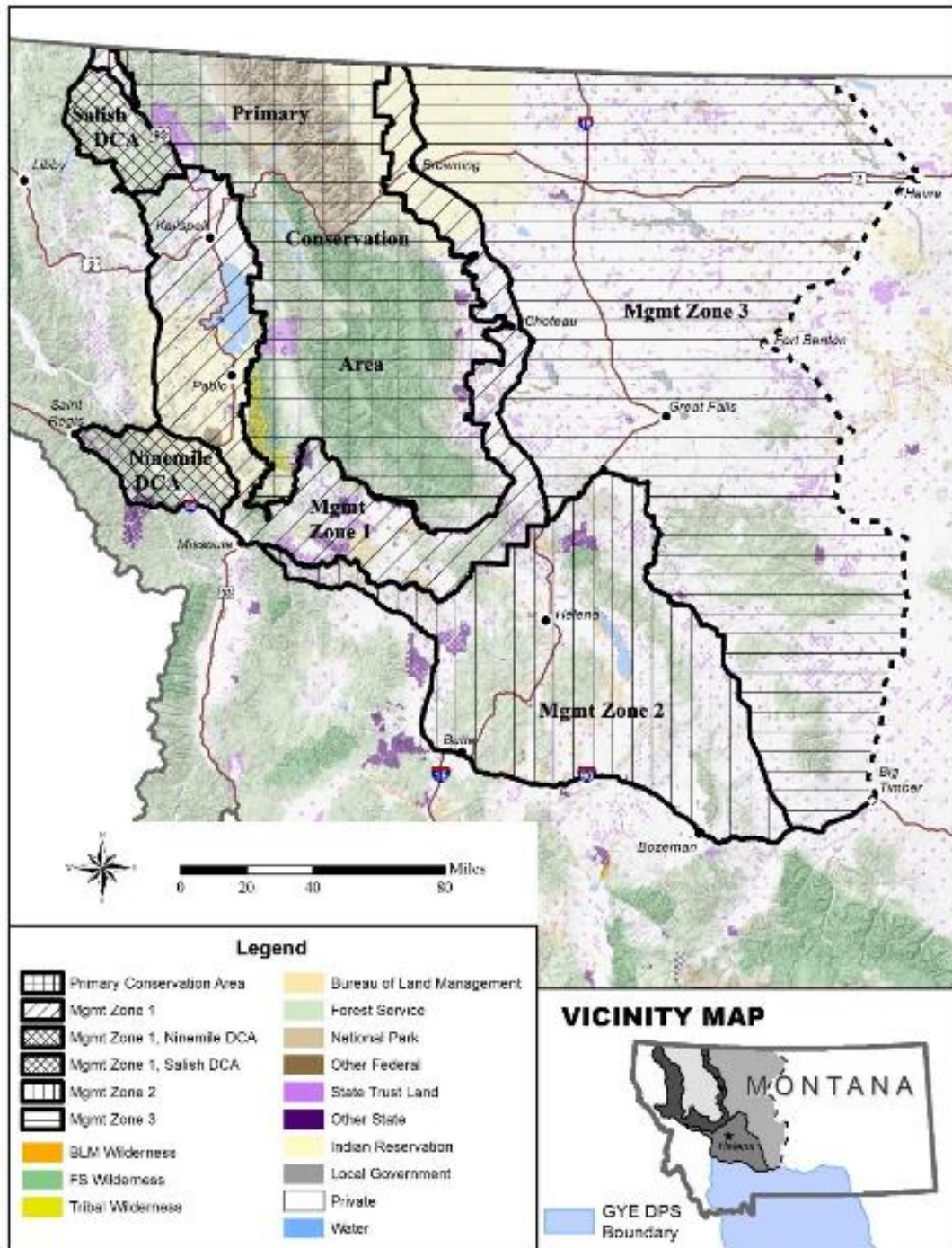
precautions after release are needed. If a Condition B bear, is relocated, the District Ranger may consider additional public safety measures.

8. Follow-up monitoring information (bear location and movement pattern) will be provided by FWP R2. Normally, the Department determines the location of the bear, if collared, within a few days after the release, and periodically thereafter. Monitoring information should be provided as available to the District Wildlife Biologist, who will distribute this information to the affected Districts, Forest Biologist and adjacent landowners as appropriate.
9. FWP maintains a web site of nuisance bear activities at <http://fwp.mt.gov/fishAndWildlife/livingWithWildlife/relocation/>. Annually, the FWP prepares a report summarizing nuisance bear actions and relocation success statistics and provides copies to the Forests.
10. If helicopter transport is required, FWP R2 will insure that all equipment and personnel experience are adequate to ensure a safe operation. Note, any requests for relocation within wilderness require additional coordination and approval from the respective line officer.
11. Residents are often concerned/interested in bear relocations near them. FWP R2 will contact local interested groups and/or individuals in areas affected by relocation and will post information on: <http://missoulabears.org/>.



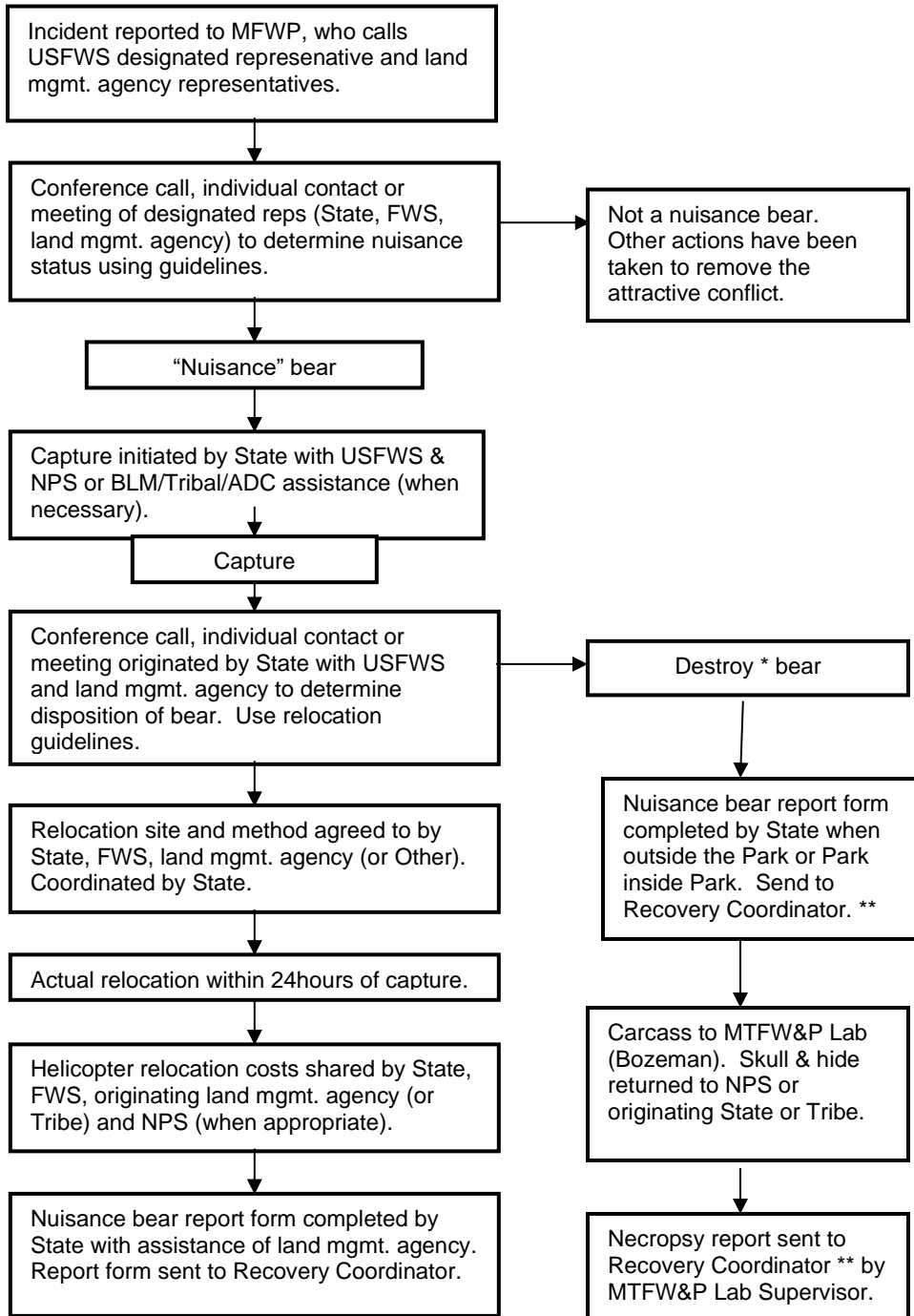
## Map 1. NCDE Grizzly Bear Conservation Strategies (2018) Management Zones and outlying areas

*Note: The areas discussed in this document include the Ninemile DCA, South end of the Primary Conservation Area and Zone 1, Western Portions of Zone 2 and the Outlying Lands West of Zone 2 to the Idaho Border.*



## Figure 1. Action Procedures for Determining Bear Nuisance Status and Management Action.

(Adapted from 1986 Interagency Grizzly Bear Guidelines)



\* Alternative may include transport to a zoo or research. Decision made at second phone call.

\*\* Recovery Coordinator distributes report to agency representatives in Ecosystem.

Hilary Cooley, Grizzly Bear Recovery Coordinator, USFWS



**Table 1. Guidelines<sup>1</sup> for Nuisance Grizzly Bear Control Action.**

Age/Sex	Condition A			Condition B		Condition C
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2nd	3rd	1st	2nd	1st
<b>Females</b>						
Orphaned Cub	RLS <sup>a</sup> /REL <sup>b</sup>					
Cub	REL	REL	REM <sup>c</sup>	REL	REM	REM
Yearling	REL	REL	REM	REL	REM	REM
Sub adult	REL	REL	REM	REL	REM	REM
Adult w/young	REL	REL	REM (adult)	REL	REM (adult)	REM (adult)
Old adult	REL	REM	--	REM	--	REM
Old adult w/young	REL	REM	--	REM	--	REM
	REL	REL	REM (adult)	REL	REM (adult)	REM (adult)
<b>Males</b>						
Orphaned Cub	RLS/REL					
Cub	REL	REL	REM	REL	REM	REM
Yearling	REL <sup>d</sup>	REM	--	REM	--	REM
Sub adult	REL <sup>d</sup>	REM	--	REM	--	REM
Prime adult	REL <sup>d</sup>	REM	--	REM	--	REM
Old adult	REM	--	--	REM	--	REM

<sup>a</sup> RLS = release on site

<sup>b</sup> REL= relocate

<sup>c</sup> REM = remove from population

<sup>d</sup> Livestock-depredating bears may be subject to removal on first offense.

Cub: *Young of the year*

Yearling: *12 to 24 months old*

Sub adult: *24 to 48 months old*

Young: *Cub, yearlings, or sub adult accompanying mother*

Old Adult: *Advanced age and deteriorated physical state, indicated by tooth wear and appearance.*

**Phone List 1. PCA/Zone 1 USFS Contacts on the south end of the NCDE.**

<p><b>Lolo National Forest Supervisor's Office</b>  <u>Carolyn Upton</u>, Supervisor  Office: 406-329-3804  Cell:</p> <p><u>Brandon Barr</u>, Forest Wildlife Biologist  Office: 406-329-3792  Cell: 406-</p>	<p><b>Seeley Lake Ranger District</b>  <u>Quinn Carver</u>,(acting) District Ranger  Office: 406-677-2233,  Cell: 406-291-4818</p> <p><u>Scott Tomson</u>, Wildlife Biologist  Office: 406-677-2233  Cell: 406-499-0724</p>
<p><b>Ninemile Ranger District</b>  <u>Eric Tomasik</u>, District Ranger  Office: 406-626-5201  Home: 406-, Cell: 406-</p> <p><u>? ?</u>, Wildlife Biologist  Office: 406-???-????, Cell: 406-???-????</p>	<p><b>Missoula Ranger District</b>  Supervisor's office: 406-329-3750  <u>Jennifer Hensiek</u>, District Ranger  Office: 406-329-3814,  Cell: 406-</p> <p><u>Scott Tomson</u>, Wildlife Biologist  Office: 406-677-2233  Cell: 406-499-0724</p>
<p><b>Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest Supervisor's Office</b>  <u>William Avey</u>: Forest Supervisor  Office: 406-449-5201</p> <p><u>Denise Pengeroth</u>, Wildlife Biologist  Office: 406-495-3637</p>	<p><b>Lincoln Ranger District</b>  Office: 406-362-4265  <u>Michael Stansberry</u>, District Ranger  Office: 406-362-7000</p> <p><u>Pat Shanley</u>, Wildlife Biologist  Office: 406-362-7006 Cell: 406-603-0985</p>

**Phone List 2. Additional Contacts PCA/Zone 1 Land Managers on the south end of the NCDE.**

<p><b>Bureau of Land Management Missoula Field Office</b></p> <p>Office: 406-329-3914 Joe Ashor, Field Manager Office: 406-329-3914</p> <p>Jim Sparks, Wildlife Biologist Office: 406-329-3827</p>	<p><b>Department of Natural Resources Southwestern Land Office</b></p> <p>Office: 406-542-4300 <u>Mike O'Herron</u>, Area Manager Office: 406-542-4285</p> <p>Ross Baty, Wildlife Biologist Office: 406-542-4202</p>
<p><b>The Nature Conservancy Ovando Office</b></p> <p>Office: 406-543-6681 Steve Kloetzel, Field Manager Cell: 406-214-2036</p>	<p><b>Stimpson Timber Coeur d'Alene Office</b></p> <p>Office: 509-447-3686 Doug Smith, Real Estate Forester</p>
<p><b>Confederated Salish and Kootnai Tribe</b></p> <p>Office: Stacey Courville, Tribal Bear Manager, Cell: 406-270-3387</p>	<p><b>Blackfoot Challenge Blackfoot Communtiy Conservation Area</b></p> <p>Office: 406-793-3900 Brad Welzien, Community Forest Manager Cell: 406-210-9900</p>

\* Alternative sites on remote privat tracts of land may also be appropriate

**Phone List 3. USFS Contacts for outlying FWP R2 territories.**

<p><b>Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest Supervisor's Office</b></p> <p>Office: 406-683-3900 Cheri Ford: Forest Supervisor Office: 406-406-683-3973</p> <p><u>Amie Shovlain</u>, Wildlife Biologist Office: 406-683-3970 (Forest WL Bio vacant)</p>	<p><b>Pintlar Ranger District</b></p> <p>Office: 406-859-3211 <u>Cameron Rasor</u>, District Ranger Office: 406-859-3211</p> <p>Anne Roberts, North Zone Wildlife Biologist Office: 406-494-0238 Cell: N/A</p>
<p><b>Bitterroot National Forest Supervisor's Office</b></p> <p>Office: 406-363-7100 Matt Anderson: Forest Supervisor Office: 406-406-363-7121</p> <p><u>Rob Gump</u>, Planning Staff Officer Office: 406-363-7109</p>	<p><b>Stevensville Ranger District</b></p> <p>Office: 406-777-5461 <u>Nell Highfill</u>, Acting District Ranger Office: 406-777-7410</p> <p>Dave Lockman, North Zone Wildlife Biologist Office: 406-777-7426 Cell: 406-381-7679</p>
<p><b>Bureau of Land Management</b></p> <p>Katie Stevens: Acting W MT District Manager Office: 406-533-7600</p> <p><u>Scott Haight</u>, Butte Field Manager Office: 406-523-7660 <u>Cornelia Hudson</u>, Dillon Field Manager Office: 406-683-8000</p>	<p><b>Montana Department of Natural Resources</b></p> <p>Missoula Office: 542-4300 <u>Mike O'Herron</u>, Area Manager SW Field Office Office: 406-542-4261</p> <p>Ross Baty, Lead Wildlife Biologist Office: 406-542-4202 Cell: N/A</p>
<p><b>The Nature Conservancy</b></p> <p>Helena Office: 406-443-0303 <u>Dave Hanna</u>, State Director Office: 406-443-0303</p> <p>Steve Kleotzel (Missoula Office): 406-543-6681 Cell: 406-214-2036</p>	<p><b>Darby/Sula Ranger District</b></p> <p>Office: 406-821-3913 <u>Eric Winthers</u>, District Ranger Office: 406-821-4244</p> <p>Dave Lockman/Justin Martens Wildlife Biologist Office: 406-777-7426/406-821-1213 Cell: 406-381-7679/541-975-4795</p>

\* Alternative sites on remote privat tracts of land may also be appropriate

**Notes:**