

**From:** [Jonkel, James](#)  
**To:** [Sarmiento, Wesley](#); [Annis, Kim](#); [McDonald, Ken](#); [FWP \\*Wildlife Regional Mgrs](#); [Manley, Timothy](#); [Wenum, Erik](#); [Hampson, Eli](#); [Trimbo, Rory](#); [Smith, Jeremiah](#); [White, Chad](#); [Kembel, Kylie](#)  
**Cc:** [Roberts, Lori](#); [Costello, Cecily](#); [Harris, Rich](#); [Wakeling, Brian](#); [Thompson, Michael](#); [Arnold, Randy](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Re: Grizzly bear relocation sites - comments  
**Date:** Saturday, December 4, 2021 6:55:14 PM  
**Attachments:** [9-19-19 Working Final Draft FWP R2 Grizzly Relocation Protocol with highlights.pdf](#)

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I apologize for the delay in getting back to you. I am just now finding time to go through my back log of emails. I went through the comments and only saw a paragraphs here and there that pertained to south end recovery zone sites with nothing negative. I did see a handful of comments about relocation of grizzlies in outlying areas in Zone 2, Deer Lodge, Helena and the Bitterroot areas with most of those comments being concerned about relocating conflict bears-----no conflict bears will be released in those areas under the FWP R2 relocation protocol. These are sites are for incidental captures, non-target captures and pre-emptive management actions of the local bears. The only specific sites mentioned that Rory and I dealt with were in the Whitetail Reservoir area east of Butte. This is a remote area, and true it has lots of ATV action and cattle activity, but again these sites are not for conflict bears, but rather these are sites for incidental captures, non-target capture and pre-emptive management actions for the local bears. I have also attached the R2 Grizzly Bear Management Relocation Protocol which goes over the process and criteria for how and where bears will be relocated both outside and within the recovery area. Take care and sorry for the delay.

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**From:** Sarmiento, Wesley <Wesley.Sarmiento@mt.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 22, 2021 8:55 AM  
**To:** Annis, Kim <KAnnis@mt.gov>; McDonald, Ken <kmcdonald@mt.gov>; FWP \*Wildlife Regional Mgrs <FWP#WLMgrs@mt.gov>; Manley, Timothy <Tim.Manley@mt.gov>; Wenum, Erik <Erik.Wenum@mt.gov>; Jonkel, James <JaJonkel@mt.gov>; Hampson, Eli <Eli.Hampson@mt.gov>; Trimbo, Rory <Rory.Trimbo@mt.gov>; Smith, Jeremiah <jfsmith@mt.gov>; White, Chad <Charles.White@mt.gov>; Kembel, Kylie <Kylie.Kembel@mt.gov>  
**Cc:** Roberts, Lori <LRoberts@mt.gov>; Costello, Cecily <cecostello@mt.gov>; Harris, Rich <Richard.Harris@mt.gov>; Wakeling, Brian <Brian.Wakeling@mt.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: Grizzly bear relocation sites - comments

The one specific negative comment we received for relocation site #273 is due to a misplaced map point. Thus, the individual thinks the relocation site in near the Mortimer gulch of sun river canyon (near cabins), when in reality it is a remote helicopter relocation site on the blacktail of sun river.

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**From:** Annis, Kim <KAnnis@mt.gov>

**Sent:** Sunday, November 21, 2021 4:41 PM

**To:** McDonald, Ken <kmcdonald@mt.gov>; FWP \*Wildlife Regional Mgrs <FWP#WLMgrs@mt.gov>; Manley, Timothy <Tim.Manley@mt.gov>; Wenum, Erik <Erik.Wenum@mt.gov>; Jonkel, James <JaJonkel@mt.gov>; Hampson, Eli <Eli.Hampson@mt.gov>; Trimbo, Rory <Rory.Trimbo@mt.gov>; Smith, Jeremiah <jfsmith@mt.gov>; Sarmiento, Wesley <Wesley.Sarmiento@mt.gov>; White, Chad <Charles.White@mt.gov>; Kembel, Kylie <Kylie.Kembel@mt.gov>

**Cc:** Roberts, Lori <LRoberts@mt.gov>; Costello, Cecily <cecostello@mt.gov>; Harris, Rich <Richard.Harris@mt.gov>; Wakeling, Brian <Brian.Wakeling@mt.gov>

**Subject:** RE: Grizzly bear relocation sites - comments

Hi Ken,

I read through all the comments and addressed those pertaining to the CYE.

References to sites near Troy:

Many folks referenced site numbers 47, 50, 51 and 53, and "sites around Troy" or "near O'Brien Creek". These 4 sites were incorrectly mapped, and the incorrect map showed them in the valley floor in and around Troy, Bull Lake and O'Brien Creek. The map has since been corrected and reposted on the website.

Sites inside/outside recovery zone boundaries:

The majority of proposed relocation sites are within the CYE recovery zone. There are 2 in the Yaak portion that are just outside the boundary and were suggested as a lower elevation spring/snow option. There is 1 in the Cabinet portion that is just outside the recovery zone boundary, and that was suggested for ease of access in the spring due to snow. The relocation sites in the Salish mountains (outside both the NCDE and CYE recovery zones, and in between the two ecosystems) were proposed because they are historically used relocation sites and have been approved by both the Flathead National Forest and Kootenai National Forest for many years. The sites that are outside the recovery zone boundaries in the Bitterroot Mountains were initially discussed and established with the USFS as potential options for the USFWS to use in the distant future. Because they were discussed and approved by the USFS at the same time the remainder of the 59 sites were discussed, they were added for consideration to the FWP Commission. All 59 proposed relocation sites were discussed, at length, with KNF and LNF district rangers and biologists and preapproved by the USFS beforehand. All 59 proposed CYE relocation sites are on USFS National Forest lands. No proposed sites are at established USFS trailheads.

Site #47 (Teepee Mountain) is inside the recovery zone boundary and was proposed as a low elevation spring/snow option when higher elevation sites are inaccessible. It has not been used before and can be removed from consideration if necessary.

Cheers,  
Kim

**Kim Annis**

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**From:** McDonald, Ken <kmcdonald@mt.gov>

**Sent:** Friday, November 19, 2021 11:52 AM

**To:** FWP \*Wildlife Regional Mgrs <FWP#WLMgrs@mt.gov>; Annis, Kim <KAnnis@mt.gov>; Manley, Timothy <Tim.Manley@mt.gov>; Wenum, Erik <Erik.Wenum@mt.gov>; Jonkel, James <JaJonkel@mt.gov>; Hampson, Eli <Eli.Hampson@mt.gov>; Trimbo, Rory <Rory.Trimbo@mt.gov>; Smith, Jeremiah <jfsmith@mt.gov>; Sarmiento, Wesley <Wesley.Sarmiento@mt.gov>; White, Chad <Charles.White@mt.gov>; Kembel, Kylie <Kylie.Kembel@mt.gov>

**Cc:** Roberts, Lori <LRoberts@mt.gov>; Costello, Cecily <cecostello@mt.gov>; Harris, Rich <Richard.Harris@mt.gov>; Wakeling, Brian <Brian.Wakeling@mt.gov>

**Subject:** RE: Grizzly bear relocation sites - comments

Attached for your review are comments received so far regarding the proposed grizzly bear relocation sites. The word file are comments that were submitted through the website, and the PDF are comments emailed or mailed. I highlighted ones where they made comments about a specific site. Please review and let me know if you have any recommended adjustments based on comments.

Kim and Neil – a great many are from the Troy/Libby area so heads up. << File: Griz Relocation Comments\_Email and Mail 11.19.pdf >> << File: Grizzly Relocation Comment 11.19.21.docx >>

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**From:** McDonald, Ken  
**Sent:** Friday, November 19, 2021 8:42 AM  
**To:** 'FWP Wildlife Regional Mgrs' <FWP#WLMgrs@mt.gov>; Annis, Kim <KAnnis@mt.gov>; Manley, Timothy <Tim.Manley@mt.gov>; Wenum, Erik <Erik.Wenum@mt.gov>; Jonkel, James <JaJonkel@mt.gov>; Hampson, Eli <Eli.Hampson@mt.gov>; Trimbo, Rory <Rory.Trimbo@mt.gov>; Smith, Jeremiah <jfsmith@mt.gov>; Sarmiento, Wesley <Wesley.Sarmiento@mt.gov>; White, Chad <Charles.White@mt.gov>; Kembel, Kylie <Kylie.Kembel@mt.gov>  
**Cc:** Roberts, Lori <LRoberts@mt.gov>; Costello, Cecily <cecostello@mt.gov>; Harris, Rich <Richard.Harris@mt.gov>; Wakeling, Brian <Brian.Wakeling@mt.gov>  
**Subject:** Grizzly bear relocation sites

Help. As soon as possible please.

During a precommission meeting that included a couple of commissioners yesterday, they were asking do we have some criteria or guidelines we use to determine exactly which site will be used to relocate a bear – for example, a minimum distance away from where the bear was captured, a minimum distance from private land, in or out of recovery zone, etc.

So can any or all of you chime in and give me some talking points on this question – when a bear is in a trap and the decision is to relocate it, what is the process for determining exactly which site it will go to.?

This will be a big part of the discussion at the December commission meeting when they will be approving transplant sites, so it will be important to have good answers so they approve our proposals.

Thanks.

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**From:** McDonald, Ken

**Sent:** Wednesday, November 10, 2021 2:55 PM

**To:** FWP Wildlife Regional Mgrs <FWP#WLMgrs@mt.gov>; Annis, Kim <KAnnis@mt.gov>; Manley, Timothy <Tim.Manley@mt.gov>; Wenum, Erik <Erik.Wenum@mt.gov>; Jonkel, James <JaJonkel@mt.gov>; Hampson, Eli <Eli.Hampson@mt.gov>; Trimbo, Rory <Rory.Trimbo@mt.gov>; Smith, Jeremiah <jfsmith@mt.gov>; Sarmiento, Wesley <Wesley.Sarmiento@mt.gov>; White, Chad <Charles.White@mt.gov>; Kembel, Kylie <Kylie.Kembel@mt.gov>

**Cc:** Roberts, Lori <LRoberts@mt.gov>; Costello, Cecily <cecostello@mt.gov>; Harris, Rich <Richard.Harris@mt.gov>; Wakeling, Brian <Brian.Wakeling@mt.gov>

**Subject:** Grizzly bears and wolf trapping

Hello Managers and Bear Specialists, << File: WMU\_statewide.pdf >>

As you probably know, the commission recently adjusted the wolf trapping regulations so that the starting date for wolf trapping and snaring in occupied grizzly bear habitat, as depicted in the attached map and listed below, is between Nov. 29 and Dec. 31. The opening dates would default to Dec. 31 unless the department determines the majority of bears have gone to their winter dens using assessment criteria such as weather, collared bear data, confirmed sightings, etc. The commission also made it clear the department could have different opening dates in different WMUs or aggregates of WMUs depending on grizzly bear activity (or lack thereof) and other circumstances.

So this is where I need your help, expertise, and wisdom. As we get nearer to Thanksgiving, there will be a need for an ongoing assessment of grizzly bear activity by WMU and likelihood grizzly bears are in their dens such that the potential of one being caught in a wolf trap is extremely minimal – in other words, pretty much all the bears have to be denned up before we open the trapping date. We are already getting calls as to whether we will open up trapping in those WMUs on Nov. 29<sup>th</sup>.

So as the time approaches please be thinking about information you would use to make a determination about whether we should open a WMU to trapping at any time prior to Dec. 31. That could include radio collar data, temperature, snowpack, ongoing conflicts or lack of conflicts, sightings, etc.

I will be back in touch in a couple weeks with a proposed process for how we might consistently make such an assessment. Here are the areas that are affected by the floating

wolf trapping opening date:

*In and near occupied grizzly bear habitat* is defined as the following:

- Wolf Management Units 100, 101, 110, 121, 130, 150.
- That portion of WMU 200 that includes the Ninemile watershed north of I-90.
- WMUs 210, 280, 290, 310, 313, 316, 320.
- The western portion of WMU 390 (west of Hwy 310, South of I-90, and west of I-15/Hwy 69).
- The western portion of WMU 400 (north and west of I-15/Hwy 87, west of Hwy 223 between Fort Benton and Hwy 2 at Chester, south of Hwy 2 between Chester and I-15 at Shelby, and west of I-15 between Shelby and the Canadian border).

Thanks for your help.

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