

From: [Jonkel, James](#)
To: [Harris, Rich](#); [Bell, Chad -FS](#); [Tomson, Scott -FS](#); [Hampson, Eli](#); [Fortin-Noreus, Jennifer K](#); [Shanley, Pat- FS](#); [McDonald, Ken](#); [Thompson, Michael](#)
Cc: [Carver, Quinn- FS](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Timing and process of interagency cooperation on gb release sites
Date: Monday, June 28, 2021 12:25:11 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[image007.png](#)
[image008.png](#)

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Sounds good. I will reach out to Ken McDonald and Randy Arnold to see how we can best assist.

From: Harris, Rich <Richard.Harris@mt.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, June 23, 2021 8:10 AM
To: Bell, Chad -FS <chad.bell@usda.gov>; Tomson, Scott -FS <scott.tomson@usda.gov>; Jonkel, James <JaJonkel@mt.gov>; Hampson, Eli <Eli.Hampson@mt.gov>; Fortin-Noreus, Jennifer K <jennifer_fortin-noreus@fws.gov>; Shanley, Pat- FS <Patrick.Shanley@usda.gov>; McDonald, Ken <kmcdonald@mt.gov>; Thompson, Michael <mthompson@mt.gov>
Cc: Carver, Quinn- FS <Charles.Carver@usda.gov>
Subject: Timing and process of interagency cooperation on gb release sites

All

To avoid left and right hands operating without awareness of each other, I'd highly recommend you coordinate these efforts with Ken McDonald in Helena, who is simultaneously working on this issue statewide.

My understanding from Ken is that the timeline is more compressed than you are assuming here, Chad. I believe Ken is looking at bringing a proposal to the Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission in October 2021. It will take that long to get things approved prior to March 2022, at which point things have to be figured out to avoid a train-wreck during the 2022 gb conflict season.

Rich Harris
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Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks

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From: Bell, Chad -FS <chad.bell@usda.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, June 23, 2021 7:24 AM
To: Tomson, Scott -FS <scott.tomson@usda.gov>; Jonkel, James <JaJonkel@mt.gov>; Hampson, Eli <Eli.Hampson@mt.gov>; Fortin-Noreus, Jennifer K <jennifer_fortin-noreus@fws.gov>; Shanley, Pat-FS <Patrick.Shanley@usda.gov>; Harris, Rich <Richard.Harris@mt.gov>
Cc: Carver, Quinn- FS <Charles.Carver@usda.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: Jennifer we were wondering if could meet over Zoom?

Thank you, Scott, for sharing your thoughts on the Lolo NF sites.

All,

It might be good to have a meeting to get everyone on the same page for this effort. I am not sure how urgent it might be to compile sites given we are looking at a **March Commission review/decision** so maybe we could wait until after field season? It seems like a busy time of the year. Perhaps Scott has provided the needed information to consider for the Lolo at this point. Once this group solidifies the possible relocation sites, we will need to involve the Ranger(s) (depending on which Forests/Districts are involved for their respective areas) to review the proposed sites. Since I am new to the Lolo, I don't want to be too presumptuous with the Rangers' decision space. I don't foresee issues with identifying relocation sites, but oftentimes, the Rangers need to consider more than the wildlife needs.

I think a meeting might also be a good way to include the Beaverhead-Deerlodge NF and Bitterroot NF. I reached out to both Forests and I think the Forest Biologist, Jennifer (Jay) Gatlin, from the Beaverhead-Deerlodge is interested in hearing more about the situation but the Bitterroot may be a little more challenging given their very limited staff. I am uncertain about how important the Bitterroot NF may be in this current relocation site identification effort, but if needed, we may need to reach out to the Staff Officer or one of the Rangers.

Chad

From: Tomson, Scott -FS <scott.tomson@usda.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, June 16, 2021 10:38 AM
To: Jonkel, James <JaJonkel@mt.gov>; Bell, Chad -FS <chad.bell@usda.gov>; Hampson, Eli <Eli.Hampson@mt.gov>; Fortin-Noreus, Jennifer K <jennifer_fortin-noreus@fws.gov>; Shanley, Pat-FS <Patrick.Shanley@usda.gov>; Harris, Rich <Richard.Harris@mt.gov>
Cc: Carver, Quinn- FS <Charles.Carver@usda.gov>
Subject: RE: Jennifer we were wondering if could meet over Zoom?

Hi All –

I apologize for being out of the loop. I have just been buried in a legal challenge. I hope to come up for air a bit next week before taking some much needed time off.

I feel like Jamie and Eli have a good handle on Seeley and Missoula potential release sites. Areas

that come to mind for me are:

- the north Clearwater loop road which is gated until the beginning of July
- a gated road on the N fork of Placid Creek – I would have to check a map to see how the ownership pattern in there may effect some coordination
- gated road at Elk Meadows on Boles Creek. We may want to have some coordination with the CSKT folks on that
- behind the gate on Second Creek – again may want to coordinate with CSKT
- upper end of Gold Creek – this is Missoula RD and also proximate to some lands still under TNC ownership (I think)
- gated road getting into lower Dick Creek – adjacent to BCCA so Jamie/Quinn could coordinate with them on that

These are my quick thoughts. Hope this helps.



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From: Jonkel, James <JaJonkel@mt.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, June 16, 2021 10:28 AM

To: Bell, Chad -FS <chad.bell@usda.gov>; Hampson, Eli <Eli.Hampson@mt.gov>; Fortin-Noreus, Jennifer K <jennifer_fortin-noreus@fws.gov>; Shanley, Pat- FS <Patrick.Shanley@usda.gov>; Tomson, Scott -FS <scott.tomson@usda.gov>; Harris, Rich <Richard.Harris@mt.gov>

Subject: Jennifer we were wondering if could meet over Zoom?

Gosh, the spring and summer have been hectic. Eli and I were visiting the other day about this assignment and we were thinking as a first step maybe Eli, Chad, myself, and others could have a Zoom with you Jennifer so that we can compare notes and get on the same page. Jennifer, do you mind setting up a Zoom Meeting?

From: Bell, Chad -FS <chad.bell@usda.gov>
Sent: Thursday, June 3, 2021 9:30 AM
To: Jonkel, James <JaJonkel@mt.gov>; Hampson, Eli <Eli.Hampson@mt.gov>; Fortin-Noreus, Jennifer K <jennifer_fortin-noreus@fws.gov>; Shanley, Pat- FS <Patrick.Shanley@usda.gov>; Tomson, Scott -FS <scott.tomson@usda.gov>; Harris, Rich <Richard.Harris@mt.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: Lolo and Helena NFs (NCDE part) 2021 Grizzly Relocation Plan Update and review of sites in outlying areas

Thanks, James.

Perhaps I will be able to meet Eli and you in person at some point this summer. I have talked with Jennifer a bit about the SW DNA project and she was gracious enough to talk with me about some of the griz movements so I understand a bit more of the circumstances.

For now, I will reach out to the Bitterroot and Beaverhead-Deerlodge NFs. Perhaps we can combine efforts to streamline the process a bit. As you likely know, for the Lolo, Scott is our best contact for insight into sites. As we move through this phase of compiling a list of possible release sites, the District Rangers will become a critical part of the process for solidifying sites on the Forest.

Whenever Eli sets up a Zoom meeting, we can discuss the specifics.

Thank you,

Chad



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Wildlife and Botany Program Manager

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From: Jonkel, James <JaJonkel@mt.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, June 2, 2021 2:50 PM
To: Bell, Chad -FS <chad.bell@usda.gov>; Hampson, Eli <Eli.Hampson@mt.gov>; Fortin-Noreus, Jennifer K <jennifer_fortin-noreus@fws.gov>; Shanley, Pat- FS <Patrick.Shanley@usda.gov>; Tomson, Scott -FS <scott.tomson@usda.gov>; Harris, Rich <Richard.Harris@mt.gov>
Subject: Re: Lolo and Helena NFs (NCDE part) 2021 Grizzly Relocation Plan Update and review of sites in outlying areas

Sounds good Chad and yes that is the approach thus far. Allow me to introduce you to Eli Hampson and Jennifer Fortin-Noreus. Eli and I have been working away for a couple of years and have a draft protocol. See attached. Eli has been working diligently on documenting all the

existing relocation sites on the south end of the NCDE. Jennifer is also reviewing sites through the Office of the Grizzly Bear Coordinator. It sounds like there is another work group out there working on adjusting the recovery zone lines so that they are more accommodating, in regard to the exiting road infrastructure. I'll see what I can find out. As soon as we have that list put together we will bounce it off all the folks on this email to make sure we did not overlook any sites or if certain sites are no longer available within the recovery zone. If all looks good we will get that one ready for the Commission. If you were willing, it would not hurt to start looking for sites in the outlying portions of the Lolo? Maybe start working on a list of potential areas (sites/polygons). It would also be nice to get someone looped in from the Bitterroot, Beaverhead and Deerlodge National Forests? Maybe we could involve some field staff that are intimately familiar with access points/road conditions behind locked gates, in remoter country? At some point in the near future, Eli will set up a Zoom with this smaller work group, just to make sure we are all on the right track.

I attached the latest Relocation Plans that were put together up in Flathead and Kootenai. Take care, JJJ.

From: Bell, Chad -FS <chad.bell@usda.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, June 2, 2021 10:01 AM

To: Jonkel, James <JaJonkel@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: Lolo and Helena NFs (NCDE part) 2021 Grizzly Relocation Plan Update and review of sites in outlying areas

Hi Jamie,

I apologize for us not responding sooner. We are working through a transition between Dave Wroblewski moving into his new position and me coming into a position that has been vacant for a while. Perhaps we can get this back on track.

I see below there is a need to identify griz release sites on the Lolo. It appears you, among others, have compiled a list of possible sites that need to be reviewed by us and added to, if possible? At this stage in the FWP process, we are just compiling a list of sites for the commission to review and approve?

I am uncertain of the best approach to keep this conversation moving forward, but I can help facilitate the process. Since I am new to the Lolo, I don't think it would be best for me to provide any feedback, but I can work with Scott and the Rangers to help move it along.

Do you have a map and/or GIS points of compiled sites? As far as the timeline, I see the new relocation process will start in March 2022. When would the Commission make a decision on the list of sites?

I am happy to talk with you or continue with email about how to best proceed. I think we need to keep this moving along to make sure we have things in place by March. Thanks,

Chad Bryson Bell
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From: Jonkel, James <JaJonkel@mt.gov>

Sent: Saturday, April 17, 2021 10:32 AM

To: Gustina, Gregory -FS <gregory.w.gustina@usda.gov>; Tomson, Scott -FS <scott.tomson@usda.gov>; Shanley, Pat- FS <Patrick.Shanley@usda.gov>; Hampson, Eli <Eli.Hampson@mt.gov>; Carver, Quinn- FS <Charles.Carver@usda.gov>; Hensiek, Jennifer -FS <jennifer.hensiek@usda.gov>

Cc: Thompson, Michael <mthompson@mt.gov>; rarnold@mt.gov; Bell, Chad -FS <chad.bell@usda.gov>; Cooley, Hilary <Hilary_Cooley@fws.gov>; Fortin-Noreus, Jennifer K <jennifer_fortin-noreus@fws.gov>

Subject: Re: Lolo and Helena NFs (NCDE part) 2021 Grizzly Relocation Plan Update and review of sites in outlying areas

I am not sure of the best process. What do you guys think? I know that Tim Manley and Amy Jacobs have worked together on the Flathead-Kootenai NF relocation protocol and updates. Perhaps for this first round of putting together site options for the commission and others to review, we could keep it in the form of a simple list with Google Map Pin Drops? I was thinking that we probably don't want to go to the level that Amy Jacobs went to on the Flathead and Kootenai maps and site descriptions until we have approval from the commission and others.

Eli Hampson and I put together the 2020 FWP "Nuisance" Grizzly Bear Relocation Protocol and Interim Decision-Making Process for Grizzly Occurrences in Outlying Areas last September and we do have a rough list of all the historically used sites (front country and backcountry) for the south end of the NCDE in both the recovery area and what is now called Zone 1.

Eli is in the process of tightening that list up and will get it out to you, Scott Tompson and Pat Shanley. I am sure we missed a few sites and some of the sites have really grown in or washed out. For example, the Lake Mountain Relocation Site, SW of the NF of the Blackfoot Trailhead, that accesses the backside of Ovando Mountain has sustained some road damage.

As for looking at other possible sites in the outlying areas of the Lolo I'm not sure what would work best. Eli Hampson and I have been looking at maps and making note of some possible places. If you would like we could keep doing that and provide you with a list of some "possible spots"? Or if, anyone is interested in taking this on we would be more than happy to assist. Or, if you guys had some thoughts on locations let Eli know and he can start putting them on the draft list.

FYI, here is Amy Jacobs email. She might have some thoughts: <amy.jacobs@usda.gov>

From: Gustina, Gregory -FS <gregory.w.gustina@usda.gov>

Sent: Friday, April 16, 2021 4:24 PM

To: Jonkel, James <JaJonkel@mt.gov>; Tomson, Scott -FS <scott.tomson@usda.gov>; Shanley, Pat-FS <Patrick.Shanley@usda.gov>; Hampson, Eli <Eli.Hampson@mt.gov>; Carver, Quinn- FS <Charles.Carver@usda.gov>; Hensiek, Jennifer -FS <jennifer.hensiek@usda.gov>

Cc: Thompson, Michael <mthompson@mt.gov>; Arnold, Randy <rarnold@mt.gov>; Bell, Chad -FS <chad.bell@usda.gov>; Cooley, Hilary <Hilary_Cooley@fws.gov>; Fortin-Noreus, Jennifer K <jennifer_fortin-noreus@fws.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: Lolo and Helena NFs (NCDE part) 2021 Grizzly Relocation Plan Update and review of sites in outlying areas

Thanks for that update Jamie. What is the process/timing/staff needs: *to get together another list of potential remote sites with vehicle access, preferably behind closed gates, for areas outside of the grizzly bear recovery area on the Lolo and Helena NF-----that is areas described in the Grizzly Bear Conservation Strategies as Zone 1, Zone 2, and outlying areas.* Will the FWP/FWS lead the effort or do you expect the forests to develop the plan using the Flathead/Kootenai documents as templates?

I've added Chad Bell to this conversation – he's the new Program Manager on the Lolo.



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From: Jonkel, James <JaJonkel@mt.gov>
Sent: Friday, April 16, 2021 9:18 AM
To: Gustina, Gregory -FS <gregory.w.gustina@usda.gov>; Tomson, Scott -FS <scott.tomson@usda.gov>; Shanley, Pat- FS <Patrick.Shanley@usda.gov>; Hampson, Eli <Eli.Hampson@mt.gov>; Carver, Quinn- FS <Charles.Carver@usda.gov>; Hensiek, Jennifer -FS <jennifer.hensiek@usda.gov>
Cc: Thompson, Michael <mthompson@mt.gov>; rarnold@mt.gov; Cooley, Hilary <Hilary_Cooley@fws.gov>; Fortin-Noreus, Jennifer K <jennifer_fortin-noreus@fws.gov>
Subject: Re: Lolo and Helena NFs (NCDE part) 2021 Grizzly Relocation Plan Update and review of sites in outlying areas

Hello Greg and all, yes lots of moving parts since that time we met in 2019. We do have direction now from FWP HQ and USFWS on how NCDE partners should proceed. Of course, most of this direction is based off the new legislation, but also advice from the Governor's Grizzly Bear Advisory Council.

The effective date of the new grizzly relocation bill that recently passed is March 2022. So, we have a little less than a year before it goes into effect. However, between now and next March, NCDE partners have been requested to identify all the historically used translocation sites (areas) within the NCDE designated recovery zone. But at the same time, we thought it would be wise to identify any potential new sites that were previously overlooked along the south end of the NCDE Grizzly Bear Recovery Area. This would include all the backcountry heliport sites in the Scapegoat, Bob Marshal and other roadless areas. Once this list has been put together and approved by USFS and other land agency heads and the NCDE Committee the sites will be presented to the Governors newly appointed FWP Commissioners for approval to use those sites for conflict bears.

And for those bears, not considered to be conflict bears, we need to get together another list of potential remote sites with vehicle access, preferably behind closed gates, for areas outside of the grizzly bear recovery area on the Lolo and Helena NF-----that is areas described in the Grizzly Bear Conservation Strategies as Zone 1, Zone 2, and outlying areas. We can also look at any remote front country sites and back country heliport sites that might be appropriate. Again, these are just suggested release sites/areas, for non-conflict bears, outside of recovery zone, that land managers feel comfortable with. Once this list is put together it will have to be presented to the Governor's appointed FWP Commission for approval.

We will be reaching out to the Bitterroot and Beaverhead-Deerlodge NF and other land agencies as well for possible sites in other outlying areas. For reference in the earlier email, I attached the updated Flathead and Kootenai NF Grizzly Bear Relocation Plan and the September 2020 FWP "Nuisance" Grizzly Bear Relocation Protocol and Interim Decision-Making Process for Grizzly Occurrences in Outlying Areas. Eli and I will be in contact and if you have any questions, suggestions or concerns feel free to respond to the email.

Take care, James Jonkel, FWP Bear Management Region 2.

From: Gustina, Gregory -FS <gregory.w.gustina@usda.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, April 7, 2021 4:23 PM

To: Tomson, Scott -FS <scott.tomson@usda.gov>; Jonkel, James <JaJonkel@mt.gov>; Shanley, Pat-FS <Patrick.Shanley@usda.gov>; Hampson, Eli <Eli.Hampson@mt.gov>; Carver, Quinn- FS <Charles.Carver@usda.gov>; Hensiek, Jennifer -FS <jennifer.hensiek@usda.gov>

Cc: Thompson, Michael <mthompson@mt.gov>; Arnold, Randy <rarnold@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: Flathead & Kootenai NFs (NCDE part) 2021 Grizzly Relocation Plan

I can't review right now, but I recall that the FWS, FWP and FS met on this issue, perhaps in 2019. As I recall, MT needed to take some action in order for reloc sites to be considered on the Lolo. I can check my notes from that meeting next week.



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From: Tomson, Scott -FS <scott.tomson@usda.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, April 7, 2021 1:57 PM
To: Jonkel, James <JaJonkel@mt.gov>; Shanley, Pat- FS <Patrick.Shanley@usda.gov>; Hampson, Eli <Eli.Hampson@mt.gov>; Gustina, Gregory -FS <gregory.w.gustina@usda.gov>; Carver, Quinn- FS <Charles.Carver@usda.gov>; Hensiek, Jennifer -FS <jennifer.hensiek@usda.gov>
Cc: Thompson, Michael <mthompson@mt.gov>; rarnold@mt.gov
Subject: RE: Flathead & Kootenai NFs (NCDE part) 2021 Grizzly Relocation Plan

Hi Jamie and All –

Thanks for sharing Jamie and for the heads up. I am including Jen, Quinn and Greg on this as this is probably something we need discussion on with a larger group on the Lolo. Esp given that we are being asked to consider new sites. I am sure I could cause all kinds of unforeseen problems if I just take this on solo☺

Anyway, not sure what best approach is – Lolo does this independently and then gets back to you? Other suggestions?

Thanks!



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From: Jonkel, James <JaJonkel@mt.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, April 7, 2021 12:30 PM

To: Tomson, Scott -FS <scott.tomson@usda.gov>; Shanley, Pat- FS <Patrick.Shanley@usda.gov>; Hampson, Eli <Eli.Hampson@mt.gov>

Cc: Carver, Quinn- FS <Charles.Carver@usda.gov>; Thompson, Michael <mthompson@mt.gov>; rarnold@mt.gov

Subject: Fw: Flathead & Kootenai NFs (NCDE part) 2021 Grizzly Relocation Plan

Hello Scott and Pat: As we have discussed in the past, Eli Hampson and I have been requested to put together a document, like the attached Flathead-Kootenai NF documents, for all the official grizzly bear relocation sites that have been used/discussed historically along the south end of the ecosystem. I have attached the R2 9-19-19 Working Final Draft that you reviewed a few years back. Eli and I will put together a new version of this draft with a list of relocations sites that have been used in the past. I know that access has changed at some of these sites and that there may be more appropriate sites to use. We would appreciate any suggestions of appropriate sites overlooked----especially along the edges and just inside of the Grizzly Bear Recovery area. In addition, we are looking for relocation sites in outlying areas on the Lolo-Helena NF----any suggestions would be much appreciated.

The effective date of the new grizzly relocation bill that recently passed is March 2022. So, we have a little less than a year before it goes into effect. However, between now and next March, we will need to identify all the historically used and potential new translocation sites (areas) within the designated recovery zone and get approval from the FWP Commision to use those sites for conflict bears. And for those bears, not considered to be conflict bears, we need to get sites approved for areas outside of the grizzly bear recovery area-----that is areas described in the Grizzly Bear Conservation Strategies as Zone 1, Zone 2 and outlying areas. These designated areas, for non-conflict bears, outside of recovery zone, will also need commission approval.

Eli and I will be in contact and if you have any questions, suggestions or concerns feel free to respond to the email.

Take care, James Jonkel, FWP Bear Management Region 2.

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Sent: Wednesday, April 7, 2021 11:12 AM

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Subject: [EXTERNAL] Flathead & Kootenai NFs (NCDE part) 2021 Grizzly Relocation Plan

Four new sites were added on the Kootenai National Forest at Montana FWP's request. Another site was added on the Glacier View Ranger District on Flathead NF (Lower Whale Gravel Pit) to reduce the need to release bears near the Border Patrol station in the very early spring and the Whale Creek site was reactivated. For several sites, info was edited for a variety of safety and logistical considerations and communication needs. The distribution list and contacts also got several updates.

If you notice needs for additional changes, send them my way throughout the year.



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