

BITTERROOT ECOSYSTEM GRIZZLY BEAR MANAGEMENT DISCUSSION
FS REGIONAL OFFICE, MISSOULA, MONTANA – MISSOURI ROOM
22 JANUARY 2020 – 23 JANUARY 2020

Objective: Gain a common understanding of grizzly bear recovery in the Bitterroot Ecosystem, including current status, where we need to go, and expectations of the USFWS and USFS

Day 1 will be a high-level discussion of background, current status, and relevant issues.

Day 2 will be a technical discussion for managers and staff-level biologists.

Agenda Topics	
Bitterroot Ecosystem Background (FWS lead)	
Predictions regarding ‘species may be present’ beyond Montana forest into Idaho? Washington? How? When? (FWS lead)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Methodology used to determine expansion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Data, triggers, key personnel ○ Database of record 	
Brief summary of relevant research	
September 2019 changes impacting Lolo, Bitterroot, Nez Perce/Clearwater, and Salmon-Challis (FS lead)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Forest Planning impacts ⇒ Context of overall management approach, identified thresholds, work capacity commitments, and forest planning schedules 	
Where do the 1986 Grizzly Bear Management Guidelines fit in? (FWS lead)	
Section 7(a)(1) Conservation and Recovery Measures (what and where?) (FS lead)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Food storage (sanitation plan, \$\$, timelines) ⇒ Information and Education (who, what, where and when) ⇒ Identification of Bear relocation sites ⇒ Others 	
Section 7(a)(2) analysis for bears outside Recovery Zone (FS lead)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Analysis units and metrics—issues of consistency and workforce capacity 	
Where do we go from here?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Forest Planning summary ⇒ Information Needs ⇒ Messaging ⇒ Roles & Responsibilities ⇒ Coordination with State Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Working Groups (science) 	
Mapping the Bitterroot	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Defining the recovery zone ⇒ Connectivity/linkage areas ⇒ Identification of baseline conditions within the Recovery Zone <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bear Occupancy (Database of record) ○ Credible sightings-methodology ○ Bear Management Units <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road densities (and/or secure habitat) • Livestock allotments • Developed sites ⇒ Challenges with databases, litigation 	
Section 7 Effects Analysis—thresholds for Forest Plan and project specific analysis - any additional	

Review/recap:

- Bears are coming, let's get ready. Conservation measures
- Need to ramp up understanding in Bitterroot Ecosystem
- Setting bears up for success will require a lot of work, especially socially
- Need more time to evaluate the Needs list that was created yesterday afternoon, and come up with a joint prioritized list for the Federal agencies; short-term, mid-term, vs. long-term needs
- Communicate with IGBC in June about what the FS/FWS is looking at in terms of needs, momentum, etc.

NEEDS and POC/Lead

- 1) **Communication Plan (BE IGBC subcommittee I & E)**
 - Talking points related to Idaho grizzly bear 'species may be present' (Jen)
 - Community based
 - Pathway and Key POC
- 2) **Conservation and Recovery Actions (7a1) (ALL)**
 - Re-examine the Recovery Plan for options
- 3) **Relocation Sites (BE IGBC Subcommittee)**
 - Short term vs. Long Term Plans
- 4) **Synopsis of Bitterroot Recovery History (Hilary)**
 - Include glossary!
- 5) **Role of BE IGBC subcommittee**
 - Report out to Executive IGBC in spring 2020
 - Incorporate actions into new 5-year Action Plan
- 6) **Recovery Zone Boundaries and Connectivity (BE Science Tech Team)**
 - Define Connectivity
 - Revisit Recent IGBC Discussions on these topics
- 7) **Identify Science Technical Team (BE IGBC subcommittee Chair)**
- 8) **Signing Protocols for Expanding Bear Population (BE IGBC I&E Team)**
- 9) **Food Storage Orders & Sanitation (BE IGBC Subcommittee + Scott Jackson)**
 - Consistency across the Ecosystem!!
 - Sanitation messaging focused on ALL bears
- 10) **Coordination with State/Tribal Partners**
 - Part of multiple 'needs' such as communication plan
- 11) **Credible Sightings, Conflict Databases and Survey 1-2-3 (Jen)**
 - Summary/Briefing Sheet
 - POCs
- 12) **Database and GIS layers Point of Contact (Lydia)**
 - Consider RO
- 13) **Consistent Analysis Unit for Section 7 Consultation (Lydia & R1 Team)**
- 14) **Training (R1 and R4 forests) (Lydia and Lee)**
 - Section 7 consultation on grizzly bears for biologists that haven't had that exposure

PRIORITY WORK and WORKING GROUPS:

#1—COMMUNICATION PLAN

- **PLAYERS:** Sandi, Hillary, Amy Bauer (IGBC I&E lead), Todd McKay (BNF Public affairs officer), someone from Nez-Clear NF (*Cheryl to provide a name suggestion*), Andy Brunell (ID state liaison for FS), Allie Turner (PAO for ID ESO)
- **TIMELINE:** = draft available for review in 45 days (by early March)
- **APPENDIX** = history/synopsis of BE that Hilary is going to produce (complete in 30-40 days)
- Chuck re-engage I&E from IGBC subcommittee, tie to Recovery synopsis
- Key Pieces
 - Living with bears; bears are coming
 - Technical aspects of Recovery Plan and what FWS needs to recover bears in the ecosystem

#2 FOREST PLANS and TIE-IN WITH BITTERROOT ECOSYSTEM

- Cheryl to lead, other Forest Supervisors involved
- 2 components:
 - Planning piece-- how to incorporate into Forest Plans
 - 7(a)(1) Conservation and Recovery ideas to consider

#3 SYNOPSIS OF THIS MEETING for Internal and Public—TALKING POINTS

- Lydia and Chris will draft something and send out to the group
- Touching bases with States (courtesy calls?)
 - Chris Swanson- talk with OSC in ID
 - Carolyn- call Randy Arnold

#4 IGBC BE SUBCOMMITTEE:

- Set up a Science Team
- Develop 5 year plan
- Relocations plan