



United States Department of the Interior
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE



**GRIZZLY BEAR RECOVERY COORDINATOR
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June 9, 2016

Keith Hammer
Chair – Swan View Coalition
3165 Foothill Road
Kalispell, MT 59901

Dear Mr. Hammer,

The US Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has received your letter dated June 8, 2016, and has decided to proceed with its scheduled habitat-based recovery criteria workshop for the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem (NCDE) on July 7, 2016, as published on May 11, 2016 in the Federal Register notice. The Federal Register notice refers to the draft Conservation Strategy for the NCDE for availability of the habitat criteria. Although they are not specifically titled 'habitat-based recovery criteria', they are discussed in the draft Conservation Strategy in Chapter 3 on pages 41–92. The Forest Service draft EIS also incorporates the habitat management criteria discussed in the draft Conservation Strategy, in Volume 3—Draft EIS for the Forest Plan Amendments to incorporate relevant direction from the NCDE Grizzly Bear Conservation Strategy for the Helena, Kootenai, Lewis and Clark, and Lolo National Forests (available at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/detailfull/flathead/home/?cid=stelprdb5422786&width=full>).

The Service will consider all written and oral comments received at the habitat-based recovery criteria workshop in developing a Recovery Plan Supplement: Habitat-Based Recovery Criteria for the NCDE. Please note that you will have another opportunity to comment on the habitat based recovery criteria. Once the Service receives public comment on the draft habitat based recovery criteria, those criteria will be set forth in the revised draft Conservation Strategy, and the Service will make the revised draft Conservation Strategy available for public comment.

Sincerely,

Wayne Kasworm
Acting Grizzly Bear Recovery Coordinator