



BASIC COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

FOR ROUTINE NON-CONTROVERSIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS



SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION

1. **Plan title** Grizzly bear safety messages re: emerging from dens and feeding issues.
2. **DTS number** N/A
3. **What is the action triggering this communications plan?** *(Please explain in no more than three sentences)*

As grizzly bears emerge from their dens it is important to communicate bear safety guidelines to the public, there is also an effort to emphasize that it is illegal to feed/approach/disturb bears following issues in the Jackson area.

4. **What is the proposed date for this action? Why has it been selected? Is it flexible?**

Target release no later than March 26, 2021, this announcement is time sensitive as bears have already been spotted emerging from dens.

5. **Which office is leading this communications effort and which other programs, regions or groups are involved?**

Lead: IR 5/7 External Affairs. Support: IR 5/7 and IR9 Ecological Services; Montana Field Office; IR9 External Affairs.

SECTION II: GOALS AND MESSAGES

6. **What story do we want to tell?**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) reminds the public to remain vigilant as grizzly bears emerge from their dens this spring. Most grizzly bear conflicts can be avoided by practicing the basic bear safety guidelines below. Feeding or approaching grizzly bears not only poses a significant threat to humans and bears but is also a federal offense under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

7. **What are our key messages?** *(These should be top concepts that readers should take away, including an understanding of why this action matters and why they should care, not a list of facts, which should be placed in the appendix. List no more than four!)*

- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) reminds the public to remain vigilant as grizzly bears emerge from their dens this spring. Most grizzly bear conflicts can be avoided by practicing the basic bear safety guidelines below. Feeding, approaching, or otherwise disturbing grizzly bears not only poses a significant threat to humans and bears but is also a federal offense under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).
- Residents and visitors in Idaho, Montana, Washington, and Wyoming are encouraged to familiarize themselves with areas where they may encounter grizzly bears. The map below represents the estimated distribution of grizzly bears and other verified sightings. People recreating and residing in the larger areas of western Montana, southeastern Idaho, the Idaho Panhandle, and northeast Washington should be prepared to encounter a grizzly bear and are encouraged to follow the guidelines below.
- The most common human-bear conflicts involve unsecured attractants, such as garbage and human food, or surprise encounters. Protect yourself and bears by staying alert and following these guidelines:
 - Never approach bears: always remain at least 100 yards (300 feet) away from bears, about the length of a football field
 - Never feed, leave food for, or make food accessible to bears
 - Store food, garbage, barbecue grills, and other attractants in locked hard-sided vehicles or bear-resistant storage boxes
 - Carry bear spray, [know how to use it](#), and make sure it is accessible
 - Hike or ski in groups of three or more, stay on maintained trails and make noise
 - Avoid hiking at dusk, dawn, or at night
 - Do not run if you encounter a bear
 - Report bear sightings, encounters, and conflicts to your state or tribal wildlife management agency
 - Instead of traditional bird feeders, set up birdhouses or birdbaths, plant native flowers, or set up hanging flower baskets for hummingbirds
 - Keep chickens and other small livestock properly secured using electric fencing or keep them inside a closed shed with a door
- If-Asked Statement regarding prosecution of woman feeding grizzlies in Jackson (Dan Coil, SAC, will be the spokesperson on this issue for any interviews):
 - The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service does not make decisions regarding prosecution. Criminal prosecution is the responsibility of the U.S. Attorney's Office. The U.S. Attorney's office decided to not prosecute this

case based on their evaluation. Please [contact](#) the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Wyoming for further details.

SECTION III: IMPLEMENTATION

8. Implementation timeline *(If not known, put TBD or the number of days/hours before/after the announcement)*

Target Date	Tactic	Responsible
All times are in the Mountain (ET -2) time zone		
Prior to publication – already completed	Coordinate with state agencies to make them aware of our messaging and plan	IR5/7: Szuszwalak, Cooley, Coil IR9: Bivens/Turner
Day of publication 10am	Send News Release to media	IR5/7: Szuszwalak IR9: Bivens/Turner
Day of publication 10am	Publish news release to IR5/7 News Room	IR5/7: Yeargin
Day of publication 10am or later	Post to social media Ask influencers (such as grizzly399 Instagram account to share the message)	IR5/7: Oles
Day of publication	Conduct interviews with targeted media - Wyoming NPR - KHOL	IR5/7: Szuszwalak, Cooley, Coil

9. Which communications tools are needed to support these strategies and tactics? *(Be as specific as possible about the products identified and who will produce them)*

Tool	Responsible	Due Date
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News Release	IR5/7: Szuszwalak	ASAP
Social media	IR 5/7: Oles	ASAP
Web updates	IR5/7: Stone / David Yeargin	Day of announcement

10. Social media plan *(Provide a list of accounts to be used as well as sample hashtags, messages, multimedia and other links, etc. as appropriate)*

In addition to posting in USFWS social channels we are proposing reaching out to influencer accounts, such as @grizzly399 to see if they might repost a graphic/message.

Messaging for Twitter, Facebook and Instagram will mirror news release and ask folks to elevate and share.



11. Stakeholder contact grids *(For each, paste in a table that provides organization name, contact person, how the person will be contacted, phone or email address as appropriate and a name of the person who will be making contact)*

Internal

IR 5/7 and IR9 Regional Directorate Teams; IR 5/7 and IR9 Ecological Services; Montana Field Office; HQ Office of External Affairs; DOI Communications and Congressional Relations.

External

Stakeholder Name	Contact Info	Contact By
Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks	<i>[Notify Public Affairs staff, information only, non-regulatory action]</i>	IR5/7: EA
Wyoming Game and Fish Department	<i>[Notify Public Affairs staff, information only, non-regulatory action]</i>	IR5/7: EA
Idaho Fish and Game	<i>[Notify Public Affairs staff, information only, non-regulatory action]</i>	IR9: EA
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife	<i>[Notify Public Affairs staff, information only, non-regulatory action]</i>	IR9: EA
Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee	Chair Jacque Buchanan, 575-644-9678, jacqueline.buchanan@usda.gov	IR5/7: ES MT FO

12. Congressional member email list

No Congressional action recommended – this announcement is a proactive safety statement, no regulatory actions involved.

13. Congressional committee email list

<i>See above</i>

SECTION IV: PRIMARY POINTS OF CONTACT

14. Media coordinators *(For national-level plans, list at least one person from HQ Public Affairs and others from region/program if appropriate. For regional-level plans, only regional coordinators are required. Enter name, email and phone)*

- IR5/7: Joe Szuszwalak, 303-236-4336, joseph_szuszwalak@fws.gov
- IR9: Dana Bivens, 503-231-6210, dana_bivens@fws.gov
- HQ: Laury Marshall, 703-358-2649, laury_marshall@fws.gov

15. Congressional coordinators *(For national-level plans, list at least one person from HQ Public Affairs and others from region/program if appropriate. For regional-level plans, only regional coordinators are required. Enter name, email and phone)*

- IR5/7: Joe Szuszwalak, 303-236-4336, joseph_szuszwalak@fws.gov
- IR9: Miel Corbett, 503-709-3881, Miel_Corbett@fws.gov
- HQ: Alyssa Hausman, 703-358-2275, alyssa_hausman@fws.gov

16. Subject matter experts available for interview (and public inquiry support) *(Must be approved by HQ Public Affairs for an HQ-led announcement or by Regional Public Affairs for region-led announcement. Enter name, email and phone)*

- ES: Hilary Cooley, Grizzly Bear Recovery Coordinator, 406-243-4903 x1, hilary_cooley@fws.gov
- LE: Dan Coil, Special Agent In Charge, 303-236-7791, dan_coil@fws.gov

17. Additional technical experts for reference *(Enter name, email and phone)*

N/A

18. Are there any non-FWS points of contact for this action? *(Enter name, organization, role, email and phone)*

None.

SECTION V: DOCUMENT INFO

19. Date Created

Created By

3/5/21	Joe Szuszwalak
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20. Date last edited

Edited By

3/11/21	Joe Szuszwalak
3/15/21	Grizzly team

APPENDIX: ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND MATERIALS

***DO NOT PUT MATERIALS SUCH AS FAQs, NEWS RELEASE OR TALKING POINTS IN THIS SECTION.
KEEP THOSE AS SEPARATE DOCUMENTS.***

(Consider the following: What is the historical context? Does this relate to other issues that may not immediately be apparent (consider other programs and regions)? Is there a scientific basis to this issue? If so what is it?)

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