From:	Servheen, Chris
To:	Serena Baker
Cc:	Brian Hires; Gavin Shire; Matt Hogan; Michael Thabault; Anna Munoz; Kenneth Ostrand; Justin Shoemaker; Fortin-Noreus, Jennifer
Subject:	Re: Media: Yellowstone grizzly bear: ? for review
Date:	Friday, March 04, 2016 2:42:16 PM
Attachments:	image003.png image001.png image002.png image004.png

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Grizzly bears in both the Yellowstone and Northern Continental Divide ecosystems have responded well to recovery efforts. These recovery efforts focused on mortality control, increased habitat security focusing on motorized access management, and reductions of human/bear conflicts due to securing human foods like garbage and livestock. These two largest ecosystems responded to these recovery efforts because each had between 100-200 grizzly bears present when recovery efforts started. Both large ecosystems also had significant amounts of secure core habitat present as National Parks and designated USFS Wilderness. The fundamental reason for the response of these large ecosystem populations, however, was that there was a sufficiently large start population with enough adult females to reproduce and increase in numbers in response to recovery efforts. In smaller ecosystems like the Cabinet/Yaak and the Selkirks, the initial population in each was very small, in the range of 15-30 bears each. Such small populations take much longer to respond to recovery efforts because so few adult females are present to produce cubs and begin to grow the population.

As an example of this, in most grizzly bear populations, about 10% of the population in any year is adult females with cubs of the year. So, in a population of 150, you have about 15 females with cubs in any year. In a small population with only 20 bears, you will average 2 females with cubs in any year. A random mortality that affects one of these 2 females in a small population can be a significant setback for population growth. Thus, small populations respond slowly to recovery efforts and take longer to recover.

Chris

On Fri, Mar 4, 2016 at 12:54 PM, Serena Baker <serena_baker@fws.gov> wrote:

> On media question:
>
> I'm interested to know more about why the bears flourished in the Yellowstone area compared to other places?
>
> Proposed answer:

Recovery of grizzly bears has been occurring in other ecosystems, as well. The Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem is one of the largest geographical areas and has one of the largest populations of grizzly bears. Since the early 1980s, the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee Study Team has been conducting a tremendous amount of monitoring and population surveys on the Yellowstone grizzly bear. A Recovery Plan was drafted in 1993, and updated regularly. Partners have voluntarily switched out food storage containers to ones that do not attract bears, thus reducing human/bear conflicts. Partners have also done extensive research on food sources for grizzly bears in the GYE and bear adaptability.

Happy to change in any way! Thanks!

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Serena Baker

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"Try to learn something about everything and everything about something." - Thomas Huxley.