PM 0052

May 11, 2016

Mr. Daniel M. Ashe
Director, US Fish and Wildlife
1849 C Street NW, Room 3331
Washington, D.C. 20240-0001

Dear Director Ashe,

I am writing to urge you to postpone delisting of the Yellowstone grizzly bear population. The proposal to remove Yellowstone grizzly bears from the endangered species list fails to preserve the progress made toward bear recovery. In fact, it will reverse it.

This proposal makes me wonder, have you ever seen a grizzly bear in the wild at Yellowstone? I have been fortunate enough to see them on two trips to the Park and each time I was awestruck by their size and majesty.

The Greater Yellowstone grizzly bear is one of the United States' most iconic species. The majestic grizzly has become a treasured symbol of our wild heritage. Visitors spend millions of dollars in the region every year in the hopes of spotting a magnificent grizzly. The loss of the grizzly would be a loss for the entire region, and a disservice to the wildlife professionals, dedicated conservationists and wildlife advocates who have fought to save them.

People and bears can coexist. We should not let bears slide back towards extinction because of misplaced political hostility towards these magnificent and beloved creatures. The end result of this proposal will be fewer bears limited to an even smaller portion of the Yellowstone region.

The proposed rule leaves Greater Yellowstone grizzlies in the cross-hairs, as adjoining states have made clear their plans to reduce the population, through trophy hunts and outright slaughter. The loss of female grizzlies to trophy hunters, who will not be able to tell the difference between a male and female bear, could cause a steep, quick decline before emergency action can be taken.

Additionally, the Yellowstone grizzly population remains isolated; further limiting their range and numbers, this could prevent them from ever connecting to other grizzly populations in nearby parks. This isolation leads to inbreeding which will

result in destruction of the grizzlies.

Please protect the Yellowstone grizzlies until there are adequate conservation plans in place to link Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks together with migration trails for the wildlife while protecting local animals. You need to ensure, not endanger, the grizzlies true recovery.

We need to work together toward protecting them and the park.

Yours truly,

Earl

Earl Welsh
6250 Hesby Way
Sacramento, CA 95823-4821