

Q&A for questions expected at the Yellowstone Ecosystem Subcommittee (YES) meeting

Draft, Pre-decisional document

1. Is the FWS preparing a proposed rule to delist as stated by the FWS in the NY Daily News on October 6 (see below)?

The Service is evaluating whether to propose delisting the Yellowstone grizzly population. The Service believes that recovery goals for the Yellowstone grizzly population have been met, and is evaluating whether adequate regulatory mechanisms will be in place to ensure the long-term persistence of this important grizzly population and its habitat.

2. When will this proposed rule come out?

We are hopeful that a proposal will be ready for public review in the next few months.

3. Will there be grizzly bear hunting if the grizzly is delisted?

This decision has not been made. We are currently discussing with our state partners various issues associated with management of the Yellowstone grizzly bear population, if it was to be delisted, including the possibility of discretionary mortality.

4. How is FWS going to respond to the tribal objections to delisting because of expected trophy hunting of grizzly bears?

The Service will have ongoing government-to-government consultation with Tribes throughout this process. We will continue to respond and interact with Tribes as requested and needed. Those conversations are between the Service and Tribes, but we will be as transparent as possible in this communication process. [CS1]

5. What does government-to-government consultation with Tribes mean to FWS?

Consultation is a deliberative process that aims to create effective collaboration and informed federal decision-making. Consultation is built upon government-to-government exchange of information and promotes enhanced communication that emphasizes trust, respect, and shared responsibility. Communication during consultation is open, transparent, and conducted in good faith.

6. What is the role of the Yellowstone Ecosystem Subcommittee in a delisting proposal?

The Yellowstone Ecosystem Subcommittee (YES) is the multiagency organization charged with recovery of the grizzly in the Yellowstone Ecosystem. YES maintains that the Yellowstone grizzly bear population continues to be a recovered and expanding population that should be delisted. The Service takes into account the wealth of knowledge and scientific information YES has accumulated over the past several decades of grizzly bear recovery when considering a possible delisting of the Yellowstone grizzly bear population.

7. Will the Conservation Strategy be revised and if so, will it need to be resigned by all agencies?

Yes, in the event of a delisting proposal for the Yellowstone grizzly bear population, the Conservation Strategy would need to be revised. [A draft of a revised Conservation Strategy would go out for public comment in conjunction with a possible delisting rule, should that be developed and released. YES members would be involved in the process of reviewing the comments received and finalizing a revised Conservation Strategy.](#) In addition to review and approval by YES, we anticipate that signatories to the current Conservation Strategy would have to signify their support by re-signing the revised Conservation Strategy.

8. Has YES approved changes to the Conservation Strategy and are these changes based on the best available science as required by the wording of the Strategy?

The Conservation Strategy was last signed in 2007 when the Service last proposed to delist the Yellowstone population of grizzly bears. In the event of a proposed delisting, the Conservation Strategy will need to be revised and approved by YES. Any suggested changes to the Conservation Strategy will not be finalized without the approval of YES.

9. Does YES have a role in delisting? What happens if some YES members object to delisting?

[Yes. As the core of the post-delisting management team, YES would be involved in finalizing the decision to move forward with delisting, with the revision of the ~~Question for Chris~~ Conservation Strategy, and with the Service in the finalization of the revised demographic criteria for the Yellowstone chapter of the Grizzly Bear Recovery plan.](#)

Why are the tribes not signatories to the Conservation Strategy even though they are subcommittee members and manage bears and bear habitat?

I need to ask Mary Erickson the incoming YES chair this question because it seems logical that the Wind River Reservation Tribes where grizzly bears currently exist inside a portion of the DMA (Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapahoe tribes) should be signatories to the Conservation Strategy, but only YES can make that decision. ~~Question for Chris.~~