

Yellowstone Ecosystem Grizzly Bear Delisting Talking Points - **DRAFT**

-Thanks to the combined efforts of all of the Yellowstone Ecosystem Subcommittee (YES) member agencies under the direction of the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee (IGBC), the grizzly bear population of the Yellowstone Ecosystem has once again met and exceeded all goals listed in the recovery plan.

-Physical condition of bears in the ecosystem indicates sufficient quality habitat exists and that bears are healthy as demonstrated by the number of reproducing females and size of litters.

-~~Careful management~~ ~~Protections~~ such as habitat criteria related to road densities and secure habitat, site developments, livestock grazing, sanitation, and use, and development will remain intact on federal lands within grizzly habitat ~~the Demographic Monitoring Area (DMA)~~ after delisting.

-Only grizzlies found within the Demographic Monitoring Area (DMA) will be counted towards the recovered population total. Animals outside of the DMA will not be included in population estimates, and their deaths will not be held against the population.

- State wildlife management agencies will be responsible for coordinating harvest in relation to population numbers within the DMA^[CS1] ~~for the first five years after the status is changed~~. Hunting will not be allowed in the National Parks. Hunting on the Wind River Reservation is at the discretion of of the Tribal authorities.

-Prior adjudication has determined^[CS2] that adequate regulatory mechanisms are in place to monitor and manage a recovered population and that concerns over the role of whitebark pine in relation to bears within the Yellowstone Ecosystem have been adequately addressed by the recent Interagency Grizzly Bear Study Team (IGBST) Food Synthesis Report.

-While a variety of population estimating methodologies are potentially available, the method called “Chao~~2~~4” is the one which provides the best population trend information and provides the highest level of sensitivity to population change accuracy and provides a ~~very~~ conservative population estimate.

-Recent genetic studies have shown that the genetic health of the Yellowstone grizzly population is good ~~and that concerns over isolation in the foreseeable future.~~

-Current population estimates support the idea that the YES population is approaching or has reached the carrying capacity for the ~~suitable~~ habitat within the DMA ~~available within the recovery area~~ and that density dependent effects are being observed, such as mortality of younger bears by older bears.

-Hunting as a management tool is supported by the IGBC and has always been presented as a potential management tool in all discussions related to management of a delisted population as outlined in the Conservation Strategy (CS). Any hunting would be managed to be within the total mortality limits specified in the proposed delisting rule and the conservation strategy.

-Once delisting occurs ~~the states have assumed management authority~~ for the grizzlies of the Yellowstone Ecosystem it will be responsibility of each state to develop its own funding sources for the management^[CS3].

-If it appears at any time that the YES population appears to be faltering there are a number of mechanisms available to trigger a review of the population status and make the appropriate changes in management and status if necessary.