



INTERAGENCY GRIZZLY BEAR COMMITTEE

CHARTER

BACKGROUND

The Grizzly Bear was listed as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act throughout its range in the conterminous United States in 1975. The initial recovery plan for grizzly bears issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) in 1982 called for a broad range of actions to reduce human-bear conflicts and human-caused mortality, provide secure habitat, and increase understanding of grizzly bear ecology. The recovery plan identified six recovery ecosystems: Yellowstone, Northern Continental Divide, Cabinet-Yaak, Selkirk, Bitterroot, and North Cascades. These ecosystems include a mix of federal lands managed by the U.S. Forest Service (Forest Service), National Park Service (NPS), and Bureau of Land Management (BLM), as well as state, tribal and private lands.

Initial efforts to recover grizzly bear populations suffered from the complexity of land ownership and lack of coordination among of the federal and state agencies with diverse missions and jurisdictions in the recovery ecosystems. Funding for implementation of grizzly bear recovery actions was also limited.

To address these problems, in 1983 the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture and the Governors of Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, and Washington signed a Memorandum of Agreement to establish the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee (IGBC). Their purpose for creating the IGBC was to "coordinate [federal and state] management and research actions to the greatest extent possible to insure the best utilization of available resources and prevent duplication of effort."

To accomplish this purpose, the IGBC needed to bring together high-level administrators from the federal and state agencies with the authority to make and support policy decisions, allocate funding to advance recovery and hold their staff accountable. It also required coordination at the field level among staff of all the agencies with responsibility for land and wildlife management within the ecosystems.

The IGBC was initially structured with an Executive Committee consisting of senior officials, Ecosystem Subcommittees¹ composed of field-level staff charged with implementation of recovery efforts, an Information and Education Subcommittee charged with coordinating outreach efforts, and a Research Subcommittee charged with coordinating research. The Research Subcommittee was subsequently replaced by the Interagency Grizzly Bear Study Team (IGBST) which served as a collaborative research unit to advance understanding of grizzly bear ecology, primarily in the Yellowstone ecosystem. The FWS Grizzly Bear Recovery Coordinator, the U.S. Forest Service National Carnivore Program Leader, and the leader of the IGBST were identified as advisors to the IGBC. An Executive Coordinator was hired to provide program and administrative support.

Over the past 33 years, the IGBC has retained the same basic structure, although the language of Memoranda of Understanding defining the role of the IGBC and makeup of the Executive Committee and Subcommittees has evolved as the status of grizzly bear populations changed and new conservation challenges arose.

In 2016, the Executive Committee agreed to create this Charter to document the mission, objectives, organization and governance processes to be used by the IGBC going forward. This Charter replaces prior Memoranda of Agreement or Memoranda of Understanding related to the IGBC.

MISSION

The mission of the IGBC is to achieve recovery, delisting, and conservation of grizzly bear populations and their habitats in areas of the western United States through interagency coordination of policy, planning, management, research and communication.

¹ Although referred to as "subcommittees," these organizational units do not consist of sub-sets of Executive Committee members, as is typical of a subcommittee. Rather, the IGBC Subcommittees consist of subordinate staff of Executive Committee member agencies.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the IGBC are:

- To coordinate grizzly bear policy, planning, management, research, and communication activities of state, provincial, and federal agencies to ensure the best utilization of available resources, prevent duplication of effort and clearly articulate management intent and programs to decision makers and the interested public;
- To coordinate implementation of the Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan through members' respective roles, responsibilities and authorities;
- To coordinate revisions to the recovery plan by the FWS as warranted by new information regarding the status of the bear populations and associated habitats;
- To coordinate development of conservation strategies by state and tribal wildlife agencies and state, federal, and tribal land management agencies for delisted populations;
- To coordinate efforts to support actions by the FWS to delist populations upon achievement of recovered status;
- To coordinate revisions to Conservation Strategies by state and tribal wildlife agencies and state, federal, and tribal land management agencies as warranted by new information regarding the status of the bear populations and associated habitats;
- To enhance information sharing among IGBC member agencies.

GOVERNANCE

The IGBC is a cooperative effort of its members. IGBC members recognize and mutually respect the authorities and mandates of all parties under federal and state law. Participation in the IGBC is voluntary and has no effect on the sovereignty or jurisdiction of any of its members.

The power of the IGBC rests in the combined, collaborative efforts of its members. To that end, decision-making by the IGBC is based on consensus among the members to the greatest extent possible. With the exception of election of the vice chair, no vote of the members is binding on any of the members. Any issue that cannot be resolved at the subcommittee level through a consensus of the members will be elevated to the Executive Committee.

The IGBC is not a governing body or legal entity. The IGBC is not a federal or state agency taking agency actions subject to the National Environmental Policy Act or Administrative Procedure Act, or their state equivalents, or ESA §7 consultation requirements for federal agencies.

IGBC member agencies retain their authority to enter into other agreements and participate in similar activities with other public or private agencies, organizations, and individuals.

ORGANIZATION

The IGBC consists of an Executive Committee and Subcommittees established by the Executive Committee (Fig. 1). Membership, roles, and responsibilities of the Executive Committee and Subcommittees are as follows:

IGBC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Membership

The IGBC Executive Committee consists of the following members. These members may delegate responsibility to a designee, provided that the designee has the knowledge, information and full authority to act on behalf of the member:

- Regional Foresters of Forest Service Regions 1, 2, 4 and 6;
- Regional Directors of the NPS Intermountain and Pacific Northwest Regions;
- Regional Directors of the FWS Regions 1 and 6;
- The State Directors of the BLM in ID, MT, and WY;
- The Directors of the Idaho, Montana, Washington, and Wyoming state wildlife agencies;
- The Directors of the British Columbia and Alberta provincial wildlife agencies;
- The Director of the U.S. Geological Survey Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center

Role and Responsibilities

The role of the Executive Committee is to provide policy-level guidance and support to the cooperative efforts to recover and conserve grizzly bears and their habitat. Responsibilities of the Executive Committee include:

- Setting coordinated direction for planning, research, management, and communication related to grizzly bears and their habitat to achieve recovery and ongoing conservation through development and adoption of five-year plans;
- Securing and allocating resources to implement planning, research, and management actions consistent with approved five-year plans;

- Monitoring progress on five-year and annual work plans and taking actions necessary to address shortfalls in accomplishment of the goals and objectives;
- Communicating needs and recommendations to higher-level decision makers (e.g. federal agency heads, cabinet Secretaries and Governors);
- Resolving inter-agency disagreements to the extent possible or clarifying issues that cannot be resolved at the Executive Committee level and elevating those issues to higher-level decision makers in a coordinated fashion;

Executive Committee Chair and Vice Chair

The Chair of the Committee shall serve a two-year term and will alternate between representatives of the federal and state agencies. The Chair shall be responsible for calling meetings of the Executive Committee, establishing the agenda, and running the meetings of the committee with the assistance of the Executive Coordinator.

A Vice Chair will be selected at the beginning of the Chair's term by a consensus of the members or majority vote, if necessary. The Vice Chair shall assume the duties and responsibilities of the chair when requested to do so or when the chair is unavailable. The Vice Chair will assume the Chair upon completion of the Chair's term.

Executive Committee Staff and Advisors

The IGBC Executive Committee will be supported by an Executive Coordinator, employed by the U.S. Forest Service.

The following individuals serve as advisors to the IGBC Executive Committee:²

- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Grizzly Bear Recovery Coordinator;
- The U.S. Forest Service National Carnivore Program Leader;
- The Yellowstone Ecosystem Interagency Grizzly Bear Study Team Leader;
- The Chair of the I&E Subcommittee.

In addition to these individuals, the Ecosystem Subcommittee Chairs serve as advisors to the Executive Committee during Executive Committee meetings. However, neither the advisors nor Ecosystem Subcommittee Chairs participate in decisions of the Executive Committee.

² These individuals also serve as advisors to the ecosystem subcommittees.

Meetings

The Executive Committee will hold two regular meetings annually, one in summer and one in winter. The summer meeting will be a 2-3 day field retreat located in one of the grizzly bear ecosystems. The responsibility to host the summer meeting will be rotated through the ecosystems. The winter meeting will be a 2-3 day business meeting with the location decided by the members. The primary purpose of the winter meeting will be to review progress on 5-year plans and make any necessary adjustments to policy, planning, research, management, or communication. Additional meetings may be held as needed and agreed to by the Executive Committee.

IGBC meetings will be open to the public, except for discussions related to personnel or litigation. Public notification of the meetings will be made by the Chair, IGBC I&E Chair, or the Executive Coordinator.

ECOSYSTEM SUBCOMMITTEES

The Executive Committee has established the following standing ecosystem subcommittees. The membership, roles, and responsibilities of the subcommittees are as follows. As with the Executive Committee, these members may designate an alternate, provided that the designee has the knowledge, information and full authority to act on behalf of the member.

Membership

Yellowstone Ecosystem Subcommittee³:

- The Park Superintendents from Yellowstone and Grand Tetons National Parks;
- The Forest Supervisors from the Custer-Gallatin, Beaverhead-Deer Lodge, Shoshone, Bridger Teton, Caribou-Targhee National Forests;
- The Supervisors of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Ecological Service offices in Idaho, Montana and Wyoming;
- A representative of the Bureau of Land Management from the states of ID, MT, and WY;
- A representative from each wildlife agency in ID, MT, and WY;
- A representative from each of the Northern Arapaho, Eastern Shoshone, and Shoshone Bannock Tribes;
- A representative from county government in each state of ID, MT, and WY.

³ Upon delisting, the Yellowstone Ecosystem Subcommittee will transition into the Yellowstone Grizzly Coordinating Committee, with responsibilities as outlined in the Yellowstone Conservation Strategy. Membership will remain the same, except for deletion of the representatives from the FWS.

Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem Subcommittee

- The Park Superintendent of Glacier National Park
- The Forest Supervisors for the Helena-Lewis and Clark, Kootenay, Flathead, and Lolo National Forests
- The Regional Supervisors of Regions 1, 2, and 4 for Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
- A representative of the Montana Department of Natural Resource Conservation
- The Supervisor of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Ecological Service offices in Montana;
- A representative from each of the Blackfeet Nation and the Confederated Salish/Kootenai Tribes
- A representative of the Bureau of Land Management
- A representative from each of the wildlife agencies in British Columbia and Alberta wildlife
- A representative of county government in Montana

Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak Ecosystem Subcommittee

- Forest Supervisors from the Idaho Panhandle, Kootenai, Colville, and Lolo National Forests;
- Representatives of the state wildlife agencies in ID, MT, and WA;
- A representative of the BLM in ID, MT, and WA;
- A representative of the Idaho Department of Lands;
- A representative of county government in ID, MT, and WA;
- The Supervisors of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Ecological Service offices in ID, MT, and WA;
- Representatives from the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho and the Kalispell Tribe of Indians;
- A representative of the British Columbia Wildlife Agency

Bitterroot Ecosystem Subcommittee

- Forest Supervisors for the Bitterroot, Idaho Panhandle, Lolo, Payette, Salmon-Challis and Sawtooth National Forests;
- Representatives from the wildlife agencies in ID and MT;
- The Supervisors of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Ecological Service offices in Idaho and Montana;
- A representative from Nez Perce Tribe.

North Cascades Ecosystem Subcommittee

- Forest Supervisors of the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie and Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forests;
- The Superintendent of North Cascades National Park;
- A representative of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife;
- The Supervisor of the Ecological Services Office of the FWS in WA;
- A representative of the British Columbia wildlife agency;
- A representative of county government in WA.

Roles and Responsibilities

The role of each ecosystem subcommittee is to coordinate implementation of the policy, planning, research, management, and communication direction established by the Executive Committee. Responsibilities of the ecosystem subcommittees include:

- Develop a 5-year action plan to implement Executive Committee direction for their ecosystem(s) for review and approval by the Executive Committee;
- Coordinate implementation of the 5-year action plan by member agencies.
- Establish necessary teams to implement approved actions (i.e. law enforcement, information and education, access management, etc.).
- Report to the Executive Committee at each winter meeting on the progress of action items in the 5-year plan.
- Recommend revisions to the 5-year plan based on the best available science and management action necessary to achieve recovery.
- Identify funding or other resource needs to carry out the tasks assigned in the IGBC-approved 5-year plan and request support from the Executive Committee to meet resource needs.

Chair and Vice Chair

The chairs and vice chairs of the ecosystem subcommittees will be selected and serve in the same manner as the chair and vice chairs of the Executive Committee.

Meetings

Ecosystem Subcommittees will meet as necessary to accomplish their responsibilities. Meetings will be open to the public, except for discussions

related to personnel or litigation. Public notification of the meetings will be made by the Chair.

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE

The Executive Committee has also established a standing Information and Education Subcommittee. The Membership, roles and responsibilities of the I&E Subcommittee are as follows.

Membership

- The IGBC Executive Coordinator
- A representative from each ecosystem subcommittee with knowledge and experience in information, education or public outreach

Role and Responsibilities

The role of the I&E Subcommittee is to coordinate information, education and outreach among IGBC member agencies in support of grizzly bear recovery and conservation. Responsibilities of the subcommittee include:

- Coordinate the development and dissemination of consistent messages about grizzly bear ecology and behaviour; how to live, work, and recreate in grizzly habitat; how to safely secure bear attractants; how to use bear spray; how to avoid human-bear conflicts, etc.
- Coordinate and oversee the annual IGBC I&E Funding Program,
- Maintain a web site (IGBCOnline.org) to provide the public with accurate and timely information about grizzly bear recovery and management, activities and upcoming meetings of the IGBC and ecosystem subcommittees, meeting notes, scientific publications and studies, and information and education on how to avoid or minimize bear-human conflicts.
- Promote effective actions and techniques to increase human safety and decrease the likelihood of bear-human conflicts.

Chair

The chairs of the I&E subcommittee will be selected by members of the subcommittee.

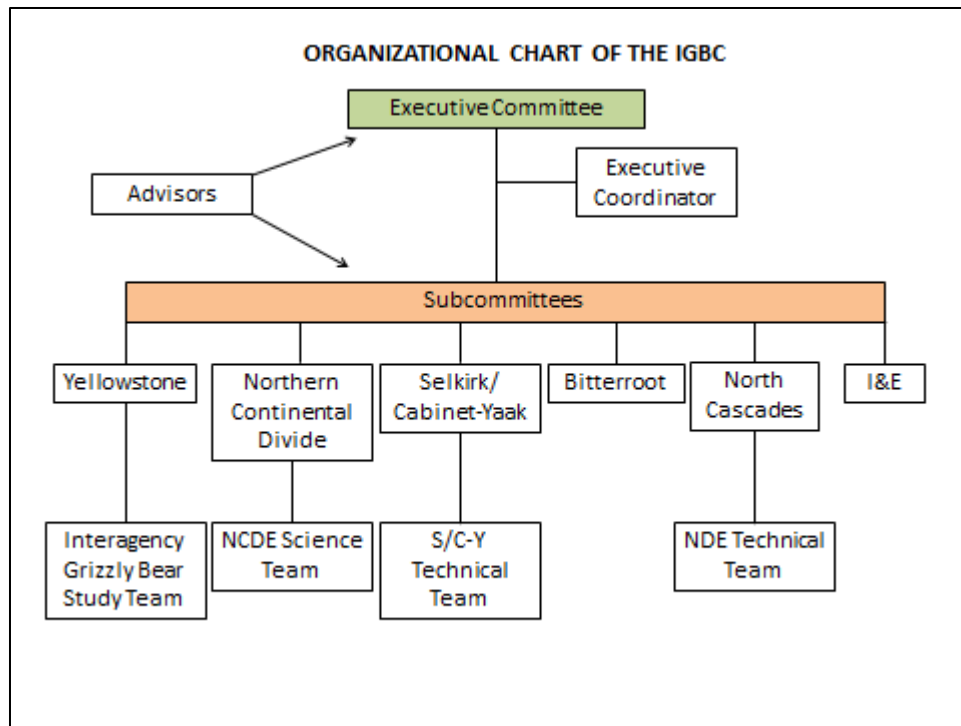


Figure 1. Organizational Chart of the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee

AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this charter may be proposed at any time by any of the members. Amendments shall take effect upon the signature of all IGBC members.

IGBC MEMBER SIGNATURES:

Regional Forester
U.S. Forest Service, Northern Region

Date

Regional Forester
U.S. Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Region

Date

Regional Forester
U.S. Forest Service, Intermountain Region

Date

Regional Forester U.S. Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Region	Date
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Director Idaho Department of Fish and Game	Date
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Director Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks	Date
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Director Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife	Date
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Director Wyoming Game and Fish Department	Date
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Regional Director National Park Service, Intermountain Region	Date
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Regional Director National Park Service, Pacific Northwest Region	Date
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Director USGS Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center	Date
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State Director Bureau of Land Management Idaho	Date
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State Director Bureau of Land Management Montana	Date
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State Director Bureau of Land Management Wyoming	Date
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Regional Director
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 1

Date

Regional Director
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 6

Date

Director
British Columbia Fish and Wildlife Branch

Date

Director
Alberta Environment and Parks

Date