

From: van Manen, Frank
To: [Canfield, Jodie E -FS](#)
Cc: [Servheen, Chris](#); [Landenburger, Lisa A -FS](#); [Tyers, Daniel - FS](#); [Barndt, Scott A -FS](#); [Fortin-Noreus, Jennifer](#)
Subject: Re: Conservation Strategy
Date: Thursday, September 24, 2015 5:11:42 PM

Hi Jodie,

This is a good question. Here's some considerations:

-A key part of the secure habitat definition is that it reflects areas >500 m from motorized roads; there is scientific justification for that criterion

-The 10 acres may seem small compared with bear movements but it in fact makes for a conservative criterion. Here's why: you can think of 10 acres as a reasonable 'minimum' area that is useable by an individual grizzly bear. In other words, the 10-acre criterion represents the minimum area that needs protection. For example, had the criterion been much larger, e.g., 1000 acres, that would mean that up to 1000 acres would be stamped "non-secure" by the model and thus could be fragmented by roads without any further consequences. Over time, that could chip away substantially at grizzly bear habitat. I imagine this criterion of 10 acre is counter intuitive to many folks, but it is actually conservative and errs on the side of caution with regard to protecting secure grizzly bear habitat.

-The secure habitat criterion is relatively easy to monitor.

I hope this makes sense, always good to think about these issues. Let me know if anyone has questions or other thoughts.

Frank

On Thu, Sep 24, 2015 at 2:34 PM, Canfield, Jodie E -FS <jecanfield@fs.fed.us> wrote:

Question for Frank: Is there some way to validate the secure habitat definition with the radio-collar data? FWP and the CGNF are working with a MSU postdoc to do that for elk (validate our definition of a security area). 10 acres seems really small relative to what bears use and that was questioned relative to the cleanup amendment.

-----Original Message-----

From: Servheen, Chris [mailto:grizz@umontana.edu]

Sent: Thursday, September 24, 2015 1:34 PM

To: Landenburger, Lisa A -FS; Canfield, Jodie E -FS; Tyers, Daniel - FS; Barndt, Scott A - FS

Cc: Frank van Manen (fvanmanen@usgs.gov); Fortin-Noreus, Jennifer

Subject: Re: Conservation Strategy

I agree with Frank's assessments.

Chris

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

From: Lisa Landenburger <lalandenburger@fs.fed.us<<mailto:lalandenburger@fs.fed.us>>>
Date: Thursday, September 24, 2015 at 1:30 PM
To: Jodie Canfield <jecanfield@fs.fed.us<<mailto:jecanfield@fs.fed.us>>>, Dan Tyers
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Cc: 'Frank van Manen' <fvanmanen@usgs.gov<<mailto:fvanmanen@usgs.gov>>>, Chris
Servheen <grizz@umontana.edu<<mailto:grizz@umontana.edu>>>
Subject: RE: Conservation Strategy

Jodie,
I have discussed this with Frank and he requested that I summarize his input on the 4 items of concern. His thoughts are shown in red below. Let me know if you wish to discuss this any further.

Lisa Landenburger
Grizzly Bear GIS Database Coordinator, GYE USGS Northern Rocky Mountain Science
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From: Canfield, Jodie E -FS
Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2015 4:56 PM
To: Tyers, Daniel - FS; Barndt, Scott A -FS
Cc: Frank van Manen (fvanmanen@usgs.gov<<mailto:fvanmanen@usgs.gov>>);
chris.servheen@cfc.umt.edu<<mailto:chris.servheen@cfc.umt.edu>>
Subject: Conservation Strategy

Hi Dan, Frank, and Chris. Hope you all are enjoying the awesome fall weather!

Lisa let me know that she is going to be working on the CS "clean-up" and the desire to be consistent with the Gallatin Clean up Amendment. I have sent her our latest version. We are waiting for a BO from FWS before issuing a final decision on that project.

I think there may be some substantive issues to tackle along with small clarifications that, in my opinion, would require assembling some biologists to discuss and hopefully come to a recommendation regarding. These are items that have been brought up in lawsuits against the CGNF.

1) The definition of secure habitat (especially the 10 acre size criteria)

* There is no scientific literature that he's aware of that supports a threshold for the minimum amount of secure habitat. At this point there is no good reason to change the current threshold of 10 acres.

2) The definition of administrative levels of traffic

* Again, there is no research to determine a level for administrative use. However, Frank points out that the risk to grizzly bears of motorized route usage by administrative (not associated with a project) is negligible or non-existent compared to use by the public. Administrative use associated with a project is already addressed with the application rules for temporary reductions to secure habitat.

3) The impact of non-motorized trails

* The highest risk of non-motorized trail usage is due to hunters, and hunter-grizzly bear impacts are monitored and count toward mortality thresholds. There is no means available to adequately monitor levels of foot traffic on all trails. Frank suggests that you include a statement saying that there is no scientific study that identifies a clear threshold of non-motorized usage.

4) 1998 as an appropriate baseline

* Frank wholeheartedly supports the proposal that the Gallatin Forest sets their travel plan levels of secure habitat as the new baseline. There is no argument against this since any improvement above 1998 levels clearly satisfies the current standard. However, for those subunits that are shared by other administrative units, buy-in from these neighboring partners will need to be obtained. In light of the fact that the consequences are highest for the Gallatin, Frank sees no conflict if only the Gallatin chooses to raise the bar.

5) Duration of temporary reduction in secure

* A project cannot reduce secure habitat below 1998 levels for more than a total of 3 years. The collective set of project roads that affect secure habitat will be in place no longer than 3 years total and must be closed to the public and limited only to administrative purposes.

Thoughts?

We should at least make a mindful decision about taking on more than clean up with a new version of the CS.

Jodie Canfield, Wildlife Biologist
Wildlife Program Manager

Forest Service

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