

Chapter 4 Management and Monitoring of Grizzly Bear-Human Conflicts

Introduction

~~Humans and g~~Grizzly bears will occasionally come into conflict with humans and livestock in areas where they encounter one another. The objective of the signatory agencies to the Conservation Strategy ~~nuisance management~~ is to minimize grizzly bear ~~human~~ conflicts with humans and livestock. In the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, ~~nuisance~~conflict bear management is essential to successful grizzly bear conservation and is often necessary to prevent property damage, livestock losses, and human injury or death. ~~Grizzly bears cannot be totally protected.~~ Like other species, grizzly bears develop individual traits, and some of those traits are not compatible with coexistence with humans. Management emphasis will shift from protecting every individual grizzly bear in the population to assessing an individual's importance to the entire population before instituting management actions. Females will continue to receive a higher level of protection than males.

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Management of ~~nuisance~~conflict bears requires rapid responses by state and federal agencies to address conflict situations. ~~This a~~Agency response will address the sources of the conflict through public education, removal of attractants, aversive conditioning, or preventive sanitation of human use areas. Agencies will also capture, relocate, or remove ~~destroy repeat offender~~conflict grizzly bears when necessary ~~and when other options have been exhausted.~~

Conflict bears often result from bears seeking and finding human related foods and garbage, pets, pet foods, bird feeders, and livestock. Analysis of grizzly bear human incidents indicates that most property damage incidents are the result of bears attempting to gain access to garbage, human foods, livestock or pet foods, or other human related foods in areas of human presence. Occasionally bears will prey on domestic swine, fowl, or goats, or will damage apiaries. They have rarely injured horses. Occasionally, bears damage buildings and campers to access food and garbage.

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Although aggression toward people and human injury or death are rare, bears will occasionally harm people. Incidents of injury are usually the result of a surprise encounter, protection of cubs, defense of a food cache, harassment, or when bears have become accustomed to obtaining food from humans.

The management of grizzly bear-human conflicts is based upon the existing laws and authorities of the state and federal land management agencies as detailed in Chapter 7. Strategies to respond to conflict bears. Management of nuisance bears usually falls into one or more of the following categories:

- Removing or securing the attractant
- Deterring the conflict bear from the site through the use of aversive conditioning techniques
- Capturing and relocating the ~~nuisance~~conflict bear to the wild
- Removing the conflict bear from the wild, including lethal ~~control~~removal

Definitions:

- ~~Unnatural aggression~~ by a grizzly bear is defined as behavior that includes active predation on humans, approaching humans or human use areas, such as camps, in an aggressive way, or aggressive behavior when the bear is unprovoked by self-defense, defense of cubs, defense of foods, or in a surprise encounter.
- **Grizzly bear-human conflicts** are incidents in which bears injure people, damage property, kill or injure livestock, damage beehives, obtain anthropogenic foods, damage property, or damage or obtain garden and orchard fruits and vegetables.
- ~~Natural aggression~~ by a grizzly bear is defined as defense of young, food, during a surprise encounter, or self-defense.
- A bear is classified as **food conditioned** when it has received a significant food reward of human foods such as garbage, camp food, pet food, or processed livestock food, and persistently seeks these foods.
- A bear is classified as **habituated** when it does not display avoidance behavior around humans or in human use areas such as camps or town sites or within 100 meters of open roads.
- **Relocation** is the capture and movement by management authorities of a bear involved in a conflict with humans or human-related foods, to a remote area away from the conflict

site. [Relocated bears are often fitted with a radio collar.](#) ~~usually after fitting the bear with a radio collar.~~

- **Repeat offense** is the involvement of a bear that has been previously relocated in a ~~nuisance~~conflict situation or, if not relocated, is a bear that continues to repeat a behavior that constitutes a grizzly bear-human conflict.
- **Removal** is the capture and placement of a bear in an authorized public zoological or research facility or ~~euthanization~~destruction of that bear. Removal can also involve killing the bear through active measures in the wild when it is not otherwise possible to capture the bear.
- **Management authorities** are the designated representatives of the agencies in the GYE including: Yellowstone National Park; Grand Teton National Park (GTNP); Wyoming Game and Fish Department; Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks; Idaho Department of Fish and Game; Interagency Grizzly Bear Study Team; each of the GYE national forests—Custer-Gallatin, Shoshone, Bridger-Teton, Caribou-Targhee, and Beaverhead-Deerlodge; the BLM; and USDA Wildlife Services. These authorities will employ one or more of the four strategies listed above to manage the conflict. make the decision to classify a bear as nuisance inside the GYE in compliance with the nuisance bear criteria (discussed below). Outside Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks ~~within the PCA,~~ subsequent management actions will be coordinated and completed by state wildlife agencies, ~~after coordination with other appropriate agencies.~~ Nuisance grizzly bear ~~Conflict~~ bear management is under the authority of the states, who will have primary responsibility for the management action. When ~~nuisance~~conflict bears are in YNP or GTNP, decisions will be made by park representatives, and coordinated with state and Forest Service representatives when necessary, e.g., for bear relocations. Management of ~~nuisance~~conflict bears outside the PCA will be conducted as described in the state grizzly bear management plans or appropriate park management plans.

Management of ~~nuisance~~conflict grizzly bears in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem will vary depending on whether they are inside or outside the PCA. This system will provide increased security for grizzly bears inside the PCA, as bears will be given greater consideration in most conflicts inside the PCA. Minimization of grizzly bear-human conflicts and management of

| individual ~~nuisance~~conflict bears is the primary direction for management within the PCA.

In circumstances that result in a ~~nuisance~~conflict bear situation outside the PCA, more consideration will be given to existing human uses. Site-specific conflict areas within and outside the PCA will be documented and prioritized to focus proactive management actions to minimize grizzly bear–human conflicts and address existing and potential human activities that may cause future conflicts. Past conflict management has demonstrated that grizzly bears can coexist with most human activities.

Outside the PCA, state management plans will govern how ~~nuisance~~conflict grizzly bears are handled. Site-specific conflict areas within and outside the PCA will be documented routinely and prioritized to focus proactive management actions to minimize grizzly bear-human conflicts and address existing and potential human activities that may cause future conflicts. The following ~~nuisance~~conflict grizzly bear standards apply only to the PCA. All ~~nuisance~~–grizzly bear conflicts that occur outside the PCA will be managed according to guidelines in each of the state management plans (Appendices I, J, and K).

~~Nuisance~~Conflict Bear Standards

The focus and intent of ~~nuisance~~conflict grizzly bear management inside and outside the PCA are predicated on strategies and actions to prevent grizzly bear-human conflicts. It is recognized that active management aimed at individual ~~nuisance~~conflict bears will be required in both areas. Management actions outside the PCA will be implemented according to state management plans in coordination with landowners and land management agencies. These actions will be compatible with grizzly bear population management objectives for each state for the areas outside the PCA.

General Criteria

Location, cause of incident, severity of incident, history of bear, health/age/sex of bear, and demographic characteristics of animals involved will all be considered in any relocation or

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removal. Removal of ~~nuisance~~conflict bears will be carefully considered and consistent with mortality limits for the GYE as described in the Conservation Strategy. Recognizing that conservation of female bears is essential to maintenance of a grizzly bear population, removal of ~~nuisance~~conflict female bears will be minimized.

Within the Primary Conservation Area

Within the PCA, but outside of the National Parks, management of ~~nuisance~~conflict bears will be addressed according to the following standards:

- Bears displaying food conditioning and/or habituation may be ~~either~~ relocated or removed based on specific details of the bear and the incident. State wildlife agencies, ~~following consultation with other appropriate management authorities, and national parks~~ will make this judgment after considering the cause, location, and severity of the incident or incidents.
- Bears may be relocated when and as many times as judged prudent by the state agency. ~~management authorities. No bear may be removed for any offense, other than unnatural aggression, without at least one relocation unless representatives of affected agencies document the reason in writing.~~ All relocations outside the PCA will be governed by state management plans.

~~Within the PCA, but inside the National Parks, management of conflict bears will be addressed according to the following standards: Bears may be preemptively moved when they are in areas where they are likely to come into conflicts with site-specific human activities, but only as a last resort. Such preemptive moves will not count against the bear as nuisance moves.~~

~~Bears preying on lawfully present livestock (cows, domestic sheep, horses, goats, llamas, etc.) on public lands will be managed according to the following criteria: No grizzly bear involved in livestock depredations inside the PCA shall be removed unless it has been relocated at least one time and continues to cause livestock depredations.~~

~~Before any removal, except in cases of human safety, management authorities will consult by telephone or in person to judge the adequacy of the reason for removal.~~

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- ~~Bears displaying natural aggression are not to be removed, even if the aggression results in human injury or death, unless it is the judgment of management authorities that the particular circumstances warrant removal.~~
- ~~Bears displaying unnatural aggression will be removed from the population.~~
- ~~Decisions will be based on criteria for relocation and removal inside the PCA for management of nuisance bears in the Conservation Strategy and best biological judgment of authorities.~~
- Authorized National Park Service authorities will implement removals and relocations within YNP and GTNP.
- ~~Authorized state or tribal authorities outside YNP and GTNP will implement other removals and relocations.~~
- State and tribal wildlife agencies in coordination with the appropriate federal agencies will predetermine adequate and available sites for relocations outside of the National Parks. Relocation sites should be agreed upon before the need for relocation occurs. In order to deal with problem-conflict bears more efficiently, managers should have full access to relocation sites without having to conduct individual consultation for each relocation.
- ~~Livestock damage prevention and compensation are addressed in individual state management plans.~~
- ~~Management of nuisance bear situations will emphasize removal of the human cause of the conflict, when possible, or management and education actions to limit such conflicts. Relocation and removal of grizzly bears may occur if the above actions are not successful.~~

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Specific Criteria for Removals

Captured grizzly bears identified for removal may be given to public research institutions or public zoological parks for appropriate non-release educational or scientific purposes as per regulations of states and national parks. Grizzly bears not suitable for release, research, or

educational purposes will be removed as described in appropriate state management plans or in compliance with national park rules and regulations.

Outside of national parks, individual ~~nuisance~~conflict bears deemed appropriate for removal may be taken by a legal hunter in compliance with rules and regulations promulgated by the appropriate state wildlife agency commission, as long as such taking is in compliance with existing state and federal laws, and as long as mortality limits specified for the GYE as described in this Conservation Strategy are not exceeded. This could include licensed hunters or property owners or their agents who have obtained appropriate permits from the state. Licensed hunters will be allowed to possess bear parts for bears that are legally harvested under a state permit.

Monitoring Protocol

All ~~nuisance~~conflict bear ~~management control~~ actions, and ~~grizzly bear human and grizzly bear livestock conflicts~~ will be summarized annually in the Annual Report of the IGBST. ~~Most conflicts are due to availability of human foods, human developments, or livestock depredations in occupied grizzly bear habitat.~~ This report will detail the cause and location of each conflict and management action and display an annual spatial distribution of conflicts that can be used by managers to identify where problems occur and to compare trends in locations, sources, land ownership, and types of conflicts.