

WYOMING GAME AND FISH COMMISSION

CHAPTER 67

GRIZZLY BEAR MANAGEMENT REGULATION

Section 1. Authority. This regulation is promulgated by authority of W. S. § 23-1-103 and § 23-1-302.

Section 2. Regulation. The Wyoming Game and Fish Commission adopts the following regulation for the management of grizzly bears in Wyoming. The Commission is committed to managing grizzly bears in Wyoming to ensure a recovered population.

Section 3. Definitions. Definition shall be as set forth in Title 23, Wyoming Statutes, Commission Regulations, and the Commission also adopts the following definitions:

(a) “Demographic Monitoring Area” (DMA) means the area that includes approximately 19,279 mi² in area as depicted in the map in Appendix I where recovery must be demonstrated for Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem grizzly bears. The DMA was developed by the Interagency Grizzly Bear Study Team as the area within which the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem population is monitored, where population estimates are derived and within which the total mortality limits will apply.

(b) “Dependent young” means any cub of the year or yearling grizzly bear, or any grizzly bear offspring traveling with an adult female grizzly bear.

(c) “Discretionary Mortality” means human-caused grizzly bear mortality over which the Department has control and authority.

(d) “Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem” (GYE) means the geographic area which includes the Yellowstone Plateau and fourteen (14) contiguous mountain ranges at or above approximately 5,000ft elevation and contains the headwaters of the Missouri-Mississippi, Snake-Columbia and Green-Colorado river systems. In Wyoming, the GYE includes the Yellowstone Plateau and the Absaroka, Beartooth, Gros Ventre, Wind River, Wyoming and Teton Mountain Ranges, and the headwaters of the Yellowstone, Snake, Wind and Green Rivers.

(e) “Distinct Population Segment” (DPS) means that portion of Idaho east of Interstate Highway 15 and north of U.S. Highway 30; that portion of Montana east of Interstate Highway 15 and south of Interstate Highway 90; that portion of Wyoming south/southwest of Interstate Highway 90, west of Interstate Highway 25, Wyoming State Highway 220, and U.S. Highway 287 south of Three Forks (at the intersection of U.S. Highways 220 and 287), and north of Interstate Highway 80 and U.S. Highway 30 as depicted in the map in Appendix I. The DPS is specific to the GYE grizzly bear population. Grizzly bears that occur within the DPS outside of the National Park System and Wind River Reservation are managed under Commission authority.

(f) “Interagency Grizzly Bear Study Team” (IGBST) means the interdisciplinary group of scientists and biologists responsible for long-term monitoring and research efforts on grizzly bears in the GYE. The IGBST contains representatives from the U.S. Geological Survey, National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapahoe Tribal Fish and Game Department, and the states of Idaho, Montana and Wyoming.

(g) “Management Plan” means the Wyoming Grizzly Bear Management Plan approved by the Commission May 11, 2016.

(h) “Non-discretionary Mortality” means grizzly bear mortalities over which the Department has no control, including but not limited to, natural mortality, illegal take, defense-of-human-life and vehicle collisions.

(j) “Tri-State MOA” means the Memorandum of Agreement between Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming that establishes coordinated management of the GYE grizzly bear population.

Section 4. Management of Grizzly Bears in Wyoming. In accordance with the Management Plan and Tri-State MOA, when the grizzly bear is delisted from threatened status under the Endangered Species Act by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in a final rule published in the Federal Register, management of grizzly bears in Wyoming within the DPS may include an established hunting season. If the Commission establishes any grizzly bear hunting season within the DPS after such listing, specific hunting season dates, mortality limits, hunt areas, and other limitations shall be established by regulation. Additionally, the Commission establishes the following grizzly bear regulations:

(a) No person shall take any grizzly bear outside of established grizzly bear hunting seasons or hunt areas.

(b) Any grizzly bear occurring outside of the DPS is considered “threatened” under the Endangered Species Act and is under federal protection.

(c) All discretionary mortality in the DMA shall be suspended, except as required to protect human safety, if the model-averaged Chao2 population estimate falls below 600 grizzly bears.

(d) All grizzly bear hunting shall be suspended in the DMA if total mortality limits for any sex/age class identified in the Management Plan are met at any time.

(e) No licensed hunter shall take any female grizzly bear with dependent young at side.

(f) No licensed hunter shall take any dependent young grizzly bear.

(g) Any hunting mortality that exceeds total mortality limits within the DMA in any calendar year shall be subtracted from the specific age/sex class’ total mortality limit within the DMA for the following year.

(h) Within twenty-four (24) hours after taking a grizzly bear, the licensee shall report the taking of a grizzly bear by calling toll free 1-800-264-1280, and shall present the hide and skull to a Department Regional Office within five (5) days for registration purposes.

(i) Any person who makes a false statement regarding the taking of a grizzly bear shall be in violation of this regulation and such violation shall be punishable as provided by Title 23, Wyoming Statutes for violation of Commission regulations.

(j) Any hunting season shall immediately close when specified harvest limits are reached.

(k) Wyoming, Montana and Idaho shall coordinate management of grizzly bears within the DMA through a Tri-State MOA to manage grizzly bear mortalities within the age and sex specific mortality limits identified in the Management Plan for long-term viability of grizzly bears in the DMA.

(l) A Tri-State MOA establishes that the states shall meet annually to evaluate annual population estimation and mortality in order to derive total mortality.

(m) The Commission is committed to monitoring the GYE grizzly bear population in Wyoming to ensure viability and demonstrate that recovery criteria are being achieved. Monitoring efforts shall

include evaluating the genetic health of GYE grizzly bears through biological samples obtained noninvasively and from bears captured for monitoring and management purposes.

WYOMING GAME AND FISH COMMISSION

By: _____
T. Carrie Little, President

Dated: July 8, 2016

APPENDIX I

