

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) has and will continue to offer government-to-government consultation with federally-recognized Native American tribes west of the Mississippi River on the Yellowstone grizzly bear population proposed delisting. Tribes have a tremendous amount of traditional ecological knowledge and scientific information to contribute to this matter, and their input is very important to the Service

The Service conducted 5 consultations with tribes located in the GYE prior to the release of the proposed delisting rule.

Since the release of the proposed rule, the Service has held two consultation meetings - one in Bozeman, MT, one in Rapid City, SD - and invited all tribes west of the Mississippi River to attend. The Service announced the consultation meetings in the *Federal Register* notice for the proposed delisting and contacted tribes directly to ensure that they were invited to these meetings.

Since these meetings, we have reached out to 5 additional tribes who have requested government-to-government consultation and are actively working to schedule these meetings.

In addition to engaging in government-to-government consultation, the Service has been reaching out to and engaging tribes on this proposal through other meetings and forums.

For example, the Service met with the Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council in Billings, Montana and invited tribal representative to engage in consultation concerning the bear.

In October 2015, the Service invited 53 tribes, Tribal Councils, and First Nations in Canada that have contacted the Service regarding the GYE grizzly bear population to participate in a Tribal webinar and conference call. The letters also invited Federal Tribes to engage in government-to-government consultation.

We have also hosted informational webinars and conference calls related to the proposed delisting. We recognize that these webinars and calls do not constitute government-to-government consultation. These were efforts made to provide

ongoing opportunities for providing timely information, answering questions, and explaining next steps.

Since April 2014, Service leadership has reached out to 48 tribes via both letters and personal phone calls or emails to offer an opportunity for government-to-government consultation related to the potential delisting of the Yellowstone grizzly bear.

We recognize that the grizzly bear is culturally and spiritually significant to many Tribes.

Region 6 has been maintaining a webpage to publish all meeting information and the hyperlink to this site was included in the tribal notification e-mails and letters